

Etching 1867 Corporation Hall and A Community's Growth

**History, Events, Accounts
Scenes & Images**

From the

**SW¹/₄ S15 T2S R11W
Kalamazoo's 160-Acre Core Downtown**

**Land Ownership Path
to the
1867 Corporation Hall**

This writing is a compilation of historical references and images leading up to and through the construction of the 1867 Corporation Hall, the first public building in the Village of Kalamazoo; and of the two 80-acre tracts of land that form what is today's core downtown of the City of Kalamazoo.

A most gracious thank you to the Kalamazoo Valley Museum (KVM), Kalamazoo Public Library – Regional History Room (KPL), Kalamazoo County Clerk-Register of Deeds, Western Michigan University Archives – Regional History Collection (WMU) Central Michigan University Clarke Historical Library (CMU) and James Gregart (JG) (see story on pages 62-64) for their support and assistance with file access, research, electronic document scanning and considerable patience with the writer. Each of the above institutions' dedicated staff is recognized in Appendix I, Contributors/Collaborators, as well as many others who have supported this effort. The above initials in parentheses will be found in each applicable footnote.

If you like objects fashioned from and appreciate wood, great; if you like spatial and numerical data, that's swell; if you enjoy historical facts, accounts, quotations, suggestions and images of how the core of Kalamazoo's Downtown began and grew, you should like this and if you like living within Kalamazoo County's 576 square miles, that's wonderful. If continued progress in diversity and inclusion is important to you, several forms of comparison to our past will show leadership with two early pioneers as well as differences from the way many of us view the topic today.

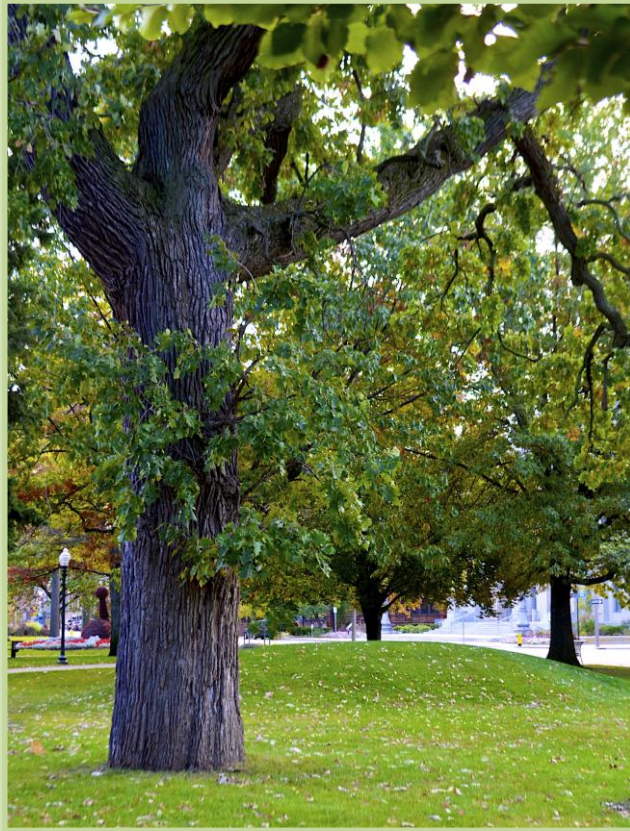
If you appreciate one, some or all of these – enjoy reading and walking through a fascinating period of time and progress.

It begins with the discussion of two women from very different times.

Wes Freeland
October 28, 2012

"An elderly Potawatomi Indian stood on South Street in downtown Kalamazoo, facing Bronson Park. It was the 1870's. She had returned to visit the place of her birth. Sad-eyed and silent, she looked westward, feeling lost. She scanned the park looking for something familiar, a landmark to remind her of those long-ago days of her childhood. Her eyes focused on a grassy knoll in the southwestern corner of the park and she exclaimed:

*O, I know where I am now for there is the mound on which I used to play when I was a girl. That used to be our attractive playground. There, long years ago, I used to meet with many other children of our people and on top of that mound, and on its green side, we spent many happy days."*¹



Burr-Oak trees are one of the dominant species in our community. Many of the accounts refer to the Burr-Oak barrens or plains "north of the prairies". All of Bronson Park's giants with one exception were lost in the 1980 tornado or succumbed in the years after.

While there are a few younger trees, the giant in the foreground, according to City Forestry Supervisor, Todd Pryor, presently is 49.5 inches in diameter and 211.5 years old. Todd indicates the "young" Burr-Oak would have been stretching towards the sky on a 12" trunk 140 + years ago while witnessing the elderly Potawatomi woman, perhaps shedding tears, as she stood to the right on South Street recounting her earlier days of childhood.

Next time you are there, please pay your respects to both "pioneers"!

Writer's Electronic image, Nikon D-7000
Nikkor AF-S 24.0-120.0mm 1:4 G ED Lens

¹ Kalamazoo Centennial Program and a Historical Review 1829 – 1929 p. 5 / Italicized within: Alexis A. Praus, "The Kalamazoo Mound: A Letter from Alexander J. Sheldon." Michigan History, December, 1960 p. 392 (WMU file 574.K1K32xC-2 RHC)

Preserving Historical Items

Written by Ms. Patti Owens
Vice President & Managing Director
CATALYST DEVELOPMENT CO., LLC

“Prior to beginning work on Corporation Hall's rehabilitation, Catalyst really wanted to make as much use of the building as possible. After all, the Company envisioned this project to be a "model" for what is possible from a sustainability point of view. That meant finding re-uses for as much of the building we would not be using as possible.

First, Catalyst gave the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety the permission to utilize the building for various training exercises. This was a very easy way to create an adaptive re-use of the building and it gave our public safety officers a "real life" opportunity to practice and learn. Please visit this website:

http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2011/07/kalamazoo_department_of_public_15.html

Once that was done, we opened the building up to the various historically minded folks in the greater Kalamazoo area, for purposes of allowing them to preserve certain artifacts, architecturally important elements and to photograph certain details of the interior spaces. The Kalamazoo Public History Roundtable group invited us to one of their monthly meetings to talk about the building, the ensuing rehabilitation and to introduce me to the bits of history they had about the building.

This meeting took place on February 25, 2011. The meeting was followed by a tour of the interior spaces of the building. It was a fascinating walk thru as the members of this group pointed out historical facts about the various architectural details, construction means and methods and materials used. The group also documented much of the graffiti (which was mostly drawn during the WWII era), and identified the pieces and parts they wanted to remove from the building for historic preservation.

Subsequent to this tour, Catalyst provided the opportunity for representatives of the group to come back into the building to remove these items. They cut out pieces of walls to remove some of the very cool graffiti (one was a well-done pencil sketch of Adolf Hitler with a noose around his neck). They took some artifacts, which were readily available, too.

After the historical folks were finished inside, we invited The Heritage Company in to identify the elements within the building, which were prime for salvage and reuse. During one of their outings inside the 2nd floor of the building, they pried a piece of wood from one of the interior walls and discovered the opposite side of the wood had a previous life as some sort of official notice sign. It was signed by the Fire Marshal at the time, "T.F. Owens".

Naturally, I took great interest in this piece of history, as did one of my co-workers, Morgan Macomber.



Writer's Electronic image, Nikon D-7000 - 105mm AF Micro Nikkor 1:2.8 Lens
Graciously made possible by the Kalamazoo Valley Museum - File 2011.68.17

We made a date then and there to dress in jeans the following day, take a couple of hammers and some flashlights upstairs and conduct an archaeological dig of our own. We began in a closet, which was located directly under the staircase leading up to the attic. This was located in approximately the middle of the second floor both east and west and north and south in the original 1867 building. It seemed like a logical place for things to have been stored, so we thought.

We pried boards off the west wall of this closet and put our flashlight down in the space we had opened up and spotted something shiny. A couple of more boards came down and "Eureka!" We found it! The fireman's cap was placed inside the wall together with a well-preserved portrait of a former Fire Marshal, a U.S. Flag which contained 38 stars (1877-1890), a tin cover from a creamery, a couple of newspapers from the late 1800's and early 1900's and a pair of men's shoes.

In turn, Catalyst donated all of these items to the Kalamazoo Valley Museum."



Image of Kalamazoo Valley Museum Corporation Hall American Flag
Graciously Provided by Kathy Tyler, KAT Design

"We pried boards off the west wall of this closet and put our flashlight down in the space we had opened up and spotted something shiny. A couple of more boards came down and"

"Eureka!" We found it!

Patti Owens



Writer's electronic image, Nikon D-7000 - 105mm AF Micro Nikkor 1:2.8 Lens
graciously made possible by Kalamazoo Valley Museum - File 2011.68.17

1867 Corporation Hall

Men, Teams, Wagons and Equipment & a Few Bystanders – One Barely Visible



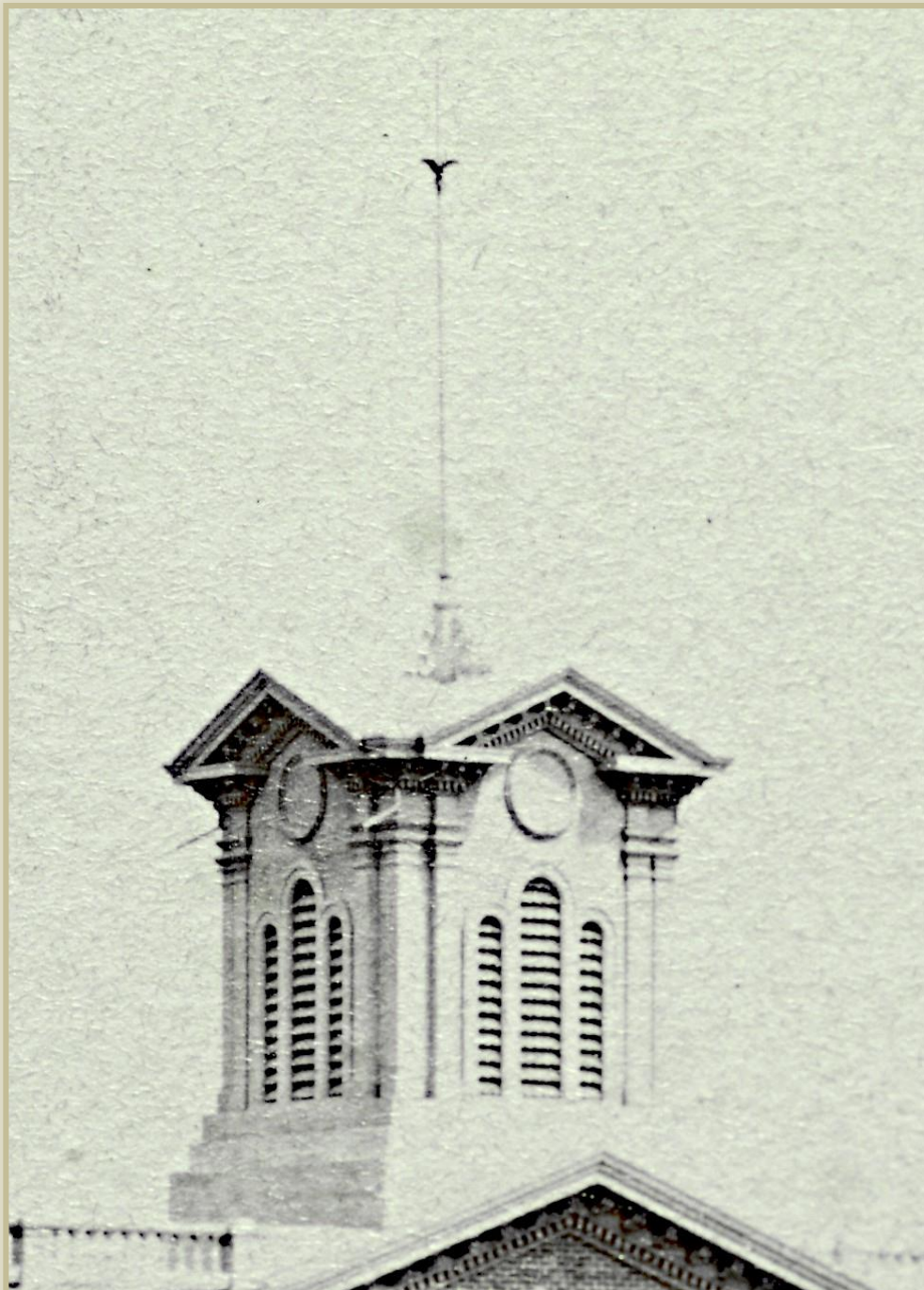
Electronic scan of photograph graciously provided
by the Kalamazoo Valley Museum – File # 47.721.80 circa 1908

This photograph along with the Tower photo that follows, melded together, in the etching, is the impetus of this writing. Precisely, the Kalamazoo Valley Museum file identifies the firemen - from left to right:

"1. Adrian Beuman (Buggy) 2. Chief Miner (Buggy) 3. Otis Binder 4. Bill Olivet (seated) 5. Bert McKee (seated) 6. Fred Corwin 7. Charles Russell (asst chief) 8. Charles Burcham 9. Henry Kersten 10. Hiram Waite (cap't) 11. Ben Minneiga 12. Ed Smith (on Engine) 13. Ed Cope 14. Al Billig 15. Chauncey Bennett 16. Herbert Van Strein 17. John Ten Bursten 18. Arthur Agate 19. cap't James Miller."

Writer's Electronic image, Nikon D-7000 - 105mm AF Micro Nikkor 1:2.8 Lens
Graciously made possible by the Kalamazoo Public Library - History
Room photograph file P-823 circa 1867-1883
Photographer's camera position -
Farmer's Alley

The full photograph can be seen in Appendix X, Image B.



Bronson Park

Electronic scan graciously made possible by the Kalamazoo Valley Museum
History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880;
KVM file H977.417 H67u.

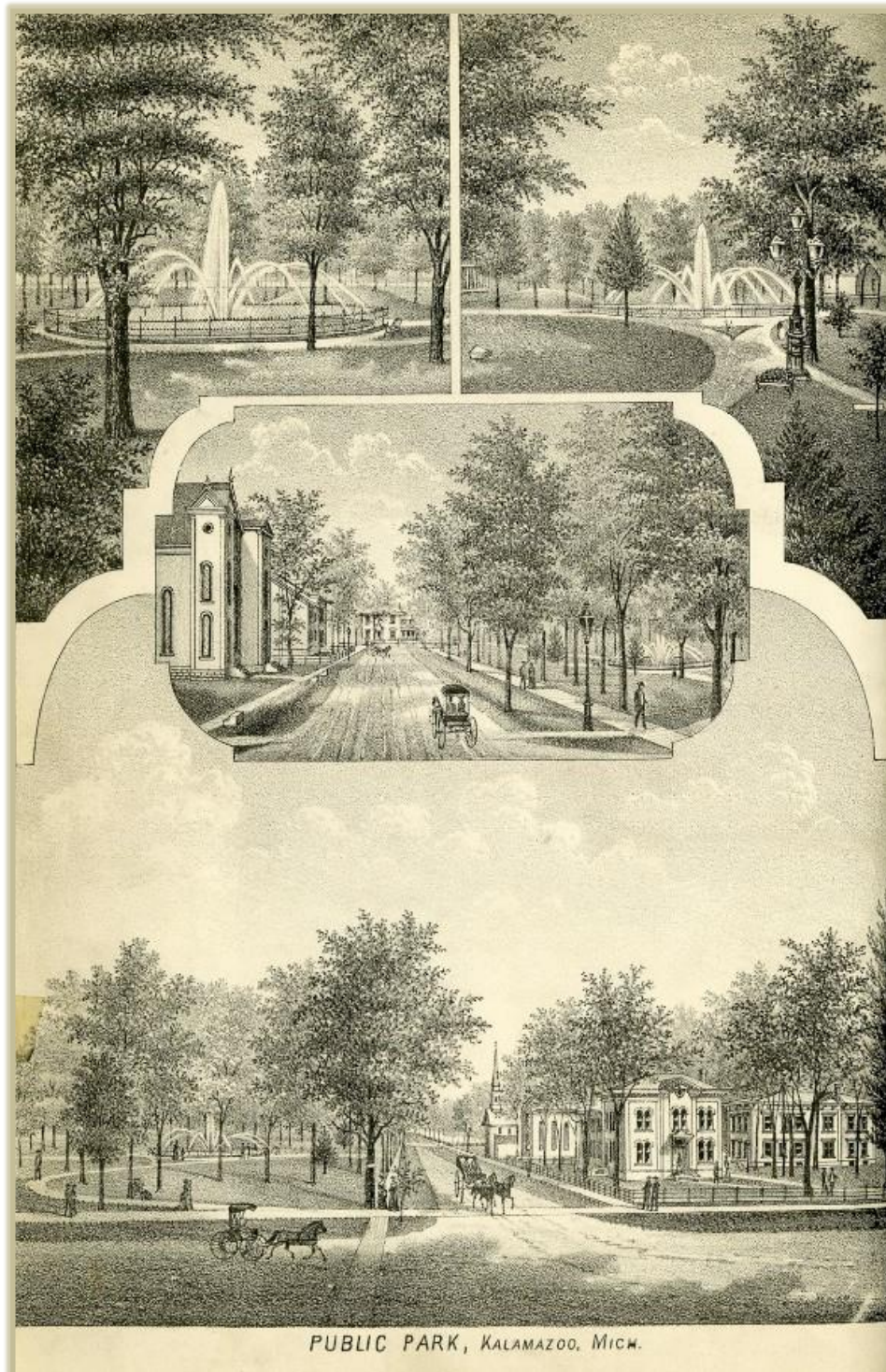


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What Lies Ahead Within this Writing

There are three themes within this writing. The first two are the writer's affinity for the beauty of wood whether live or felled by nature or humans for our required or passive purposes; and preserving light emitting and light reflecting objects, scenes, life and images through photography. The third deals with history; but, there is little or no claim to being a historian in the sense portrayed within, but the writer has tried in vain to be historically accurate. For the writer, history is critical in understanding the present and the future in any field or profession, and the years have brought increasing appreciation for our past be it world, U.S. or local; and be it relative to economics, human history, the earth or the universe or so many other sub-parts related thereto.

Beginning the history within, which is well before the initial 160 acres forming the Village of Bronson, was based on work at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation to support the Regional Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Kalamazoo program. It was then linked to the significant efforts of Dr. Kiran Cunningham and Dr. Hannah McKinney, Kalamazoo College Professors, in their work surrounding land use planning and growth. The full PowerPoint can be found on the Convening our Community website, <http://www.kzoo.edu/convene>. The Leadership Kalamazoo project graphically laid out how the formation of the governmental structure in Kalamazoo County evolved and the intricacies of the 60 or so taxing and tax capturing entities our county has today.

But it was the Douglas Fir structure of the 1867 Corporation Hall that was the catalyst in bringing together the history of the County, Village of Bronson, core of Kalamazoo's downtown and Corporation Hall, coincidentally, to the forefront.

As important, the location of the 1867 Corporation Hall encompassed each of the writer's five employment locations within the two 80-acre tracts of land initially forming the Plat of "Brunson" and then the Village of Bronson. Aside from this opening, each image, event, account, or remark is arranged chronologically to provide a "flavor" of the path leading to the development of the downtown and, importantly, the land acquisitions on which the 1867 and 2013 Corporation Halls were and are now situated.

Opening Images Most Frequently Referred to Characters

The page 8, 9 and 10 opening images represent the essence of history of the 1867 Corporation Hall and the core of present day Downtown Kalamazoo. The page 8 and 9 images, merged, became the template for the 1867 Corporation Hall Etching described in Appendix III, Woodshop Notes. All three images, as with every other nook and cranny of this story, are welded together by a common thread – the **SW¼ S15 T2S R11W** of the State of Michigan, as identified long ago by surveyors picking and kicking their way through the Northwest Territory.

Several characters are central to this writing due to their visible roles and or happenings in the **SW¼ S15 T2S R11W** - those being Titus and Sally Bronson, Richard P. Stephenson (Sally's brother), Justus Burdick, Fredrick Curtenius, Fredrick Bush & Thomas Patterson, Lucinda Stone and Abraham Lincoln.

Getting Started

Interest in the 1867 Corporation Hall occurred quite by accident. It all began in the summer of 1964 when moving to Kalamazoo, as a junior, to complete college at Western Michigan University. Part-time work began at the former Industrial State Bank in the Kalamazoo Saving's Bank gray columnar building on the north side of Michigan Avenue, as Portage Street Ys southeast. That was followed by stints in the American National Bank Building, Kalamazoo County Building, County Administration Building on West Kalamazoo Avenue and for the past several years at the Comerica Building, the location of the Kalamazoo Community Foundation.

Three of the above structures, the first, second and fifth, are situated on an 80-acre tract of land and the other two on a contiguous 80-acre tract to the west. On March 31, 1831, four months after "locating" the two parcels, brother-in-laws, Titus Bronson and Richard P. Stephenson recorded the *Plat of the Town of Brunson*. In June of that year, Mr. Stephenson and Mr. Bronson received "patents"² from the United States thereby becoming the property owners of the two side-by-side tracts, together defined by surveyors as the **SW¼ S15 T2S R11W** (southwest ¼, section 15, town 2 south, range 11 west) Michigan Territory.

In the late fall of 2011, 180 years later, from the east part of the Foundation offices a work crew was noticed removing one of the buildings on the Kalamazoo Mall. Intrigue quickly arose with the rather large joists being removed. Not knowing the history of the building being removed; at the behest (twice) of Art Mueller, security officer for Gilmore Real Estate and knowing of the writer's affection for wood, suggested an inquiry about the possibility of obtaining a couple of the somewhat shabby appearing, but thick 14' – 24' beams.

Mike Bryant's, CSM Group's Senior Project Manager, work crew was kind and had three fourteen feet, 2.5: x 11" Douglas Fir joists laid to the side. The joists had just been roughed out of the middle of the east ground floor area of the Hall where, it became known to the writer later, they had laid and supported a variety of purposes for 144 years. Later in the day, Erik Krogh helped roust the "logs" into the Silverado. As the history of the joists was learned, it was inescapable that something special had to be created with such a precious and beautifully grained historical natural resource.

² A land patent is the only form of proof of absolute title to land in the United States <http://teamlaw.org/PtentHowTo.htm>. Such patent can also be issued by a state.

After some thought, in late December Ms. Patti Owens, Vice President, Managing Director; Catalyst Development Co, L.L.C. was contacted. Over two or so months, we discussed a concept using the joists of the 1867 Corporation Hall. The vision was based on two examples of wood burned “etchings” completed over the prior two years.

Penciled and then etched on 18” x 24” Basswood plates, the first was a favorite 35-year-old necktie scene of a duck lifting from a reedy pond with a somewhat dilapidated rowboat lying in the reeds under the mostly bare fall foliage. The second was a goose flying over a marsh against the rising sun entitled *Lone Wandering. But Not Lost* – a scene from one of the beautiful stained glass windows of the Ladies Library Building. Patti was most encouraging and after several weeks the shop part of the project began to progress.

With around 250 hours invested, this woodshop part of the project was pretty much completed in July (see Appendix III Woodshop Notes: Etching and Framing 1867 Corporation Hall). The etching is an approximate 1:33 scale of the 1867 Corporation Hall attached to a back-plate, which without its frame is 48” x 38” or a horizontal 4:6 photographic composition. Of course, both are from the Hall’s wood.

As the work progressed, history, past to present, became an equal partner to the project. The time period chosen to begin was some 14,000 years ago and eventually leads to and though the 1867 Corporation Hall to the 2013 Corporation Hall – two constructions, one public and one private, 145 years apart.

The 1867 Corporation Hall was historical and notable. After all, it was the “Village’s” first public building. The history focused on the 1867 Corporation Hall and the first platted Village of Brunson and its growth and progress. After considerable research and questions to many of the contributors/collaborators noted in Appendix I, some 650 hours or so of time, most of the history was completed by the middle of October with four months of fairly constant back and forth electronic messaging between Kalamazoo and upper Lake Huron with historian Jim Gregart and his special Everts and Abbot *History of Kalamazoo County* that can read about later on.

The Yellow Stripes of Paint

One morning, looking out the Community Foundation’s third floor office window across to the Kalamazoo County Building, the project became more focused than just the etching of the Hall. Having researched the land ownership path with the gracious help of George Amar, Attorney’s Title Office on Portage’s Westnedge Ave, one could easily visualize the surveyor’s line beginning at the South Street intersection and running north through the middle of Rose Street under its yellow traffic stripes. The line was “laid” several hundred years before in the earlier part of the Michigan Territory’s history.

Eventually the surveyor's line passed by the County Administration Building at the corner of North Rose Street and Kalamazoo Avenue to just north of the Amtrak rails and, most appropriately, very close to or within the Reverend Martin Luther King Memorial Park (the connection comes in several ways later on). There it intersects an east to west survey line. Likewise, at South Street another survey line also runs east and west.

Between the South Street and the MLK site was a half-mile. The parcels of land on both sides of the Rose Street section line respectively went a quarter mile to the west and a quarter mile to the east. Connecting those to the MLK east / west line then created a square 1/4 mile. In turn this is how the **SW¼ S15 T2S R11W** lying in the original "congressional or survey town" of Kalamazoo, and where its first village was platted, and defined so long before. Today we know these 160 acres, more or less, as the business, financial, entertainment, public, open space and charitable core of the City of Kalamazoo's downtown.

A Full Circle – A Great Quarter Square Mile

Being employed within the two 80-acre tracts of this writing since August 1964 made this project much more intense than when it began. Anyone working in and around this 160-acre quarter section we call the core of Kalamazoo's downtown has to have considerable humility for its ups and downs and now its vitality and progress.

The opportunity to observe the latter part of the first Kalamazoo Mall's flourishing activity, its demise in the 70s and its conversion from primarily shopping to a wide array of private, public and charitable venues we have today, has been an amazing trip. All the past private, public and charitable pioneer women, men and those today who have invested heavily through their businesses and public and charitable institutions to make the Downtown what it is, were and are simply magnificent!

The Pioneers

Each of the many business and civic leaders from yesterday and those today had to carry the belief that a strong downtown is central to a strong core city, which in turn is central to a strong county and region. We should always hold them in the highest esteem for making our Greater Kalamazoo area the wonderful place that it is!

Contributors/Collaborators

As the project unfolded, there were a number of institutions, individuals, friends, acquaintances and family members who contributed to this writing. Each is identified in Appendix I, Contributors/Collaborators, and from time to time through appropriate footnotes to the narrative.

The project would not have occurred but for Art's "pushing" for the "ask" and for the construction crew, which was so kindly receptive. Later then, the interest from and guidance, consultation, encouragement and support from Patti Owens, was simply the very best!

George Amar was responsible for the expansion into the history with his gift and support on the dated transactional side of the land ownership path leading to the present site of the two halls. While not first envisioned, George's contribution brought in so much more.

While many other of the contributors also have the Everts and Abbot historical references, its access coming from a long-time friend and professional acquaintance, Jim Gregart, through his original leather bound edition, was special. Not only was it the reference material itself and other research, but also it was his zest and wonderful ability with and affection for history.

To Art, the work crew, George and Jimmmmy and so many more who helped along the way (see Contributors/Collaborators – Appendix I), **a best and most appreciative thank you!**

For Patti and Catalyst Development Co, L.L.C., thank you for providing the opportunity of preserving this beautiful etching and frame wood, and especially for your foresight to preserve, by the writer's best estimate between 12,000 and 15,000 board feet of the 1867 Halls structural beams for re-use in the 2013 Corporation Hall project. **Patti to you and Catalyst, a best and most appreciative thank you!**

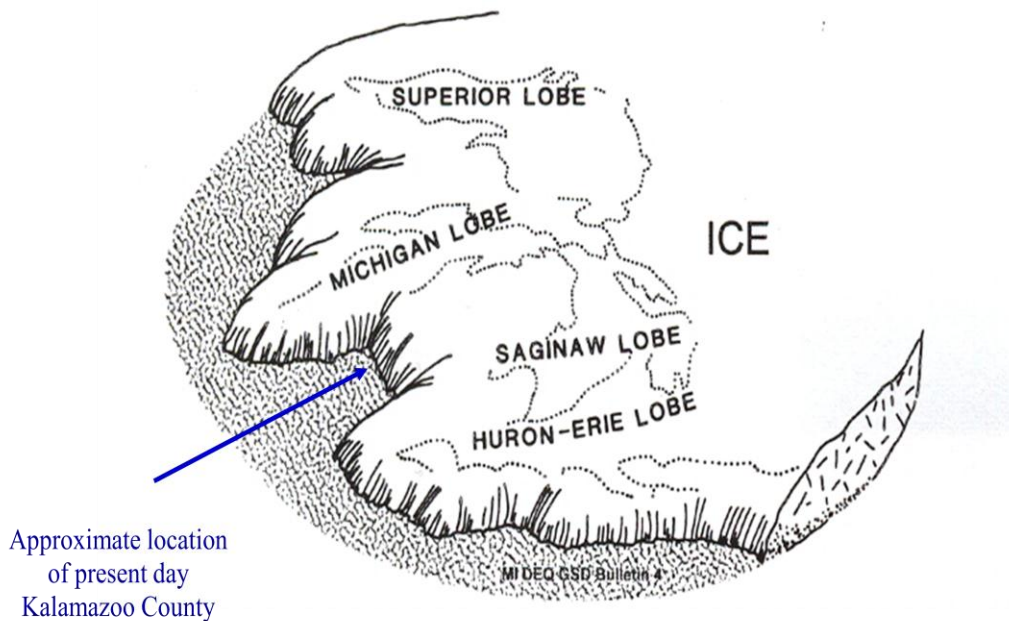
After this quick stop with a collage of images from Printer J. J. Stone of Madison, Wis. and Lithographers Beck and Paul of Milwaukee Wis. extracted from their *Birds Eye View of Kalamazoo – 1883*, your venture ahead begins when it is pretty cold long ago in the Northwest Territory.



Writer's crop of electronic image graciously provided by
Clarke Historical Library (CMU) file #b1817393~SO
Library of Congress call number –
G4114.K2A3 1883 .W4

Prior to and Early in Our Community's History - A ³

Michigan as it appeared 14,500 years ago



"Once the ice shields left and a warming environment followed, the evolution of Humans, migrating from Africa over the vastness of the Asian and European continents, brought hominoid life to North America via Alaska, and the Atlantic Ocean. Initially the First Nation peoples, the Moundbuilders, Sioux, Maxcoutin, Miami and lastly the Pottawatomi Tribe, a branch of the greater Algonquin people after migrating south and southeast, began to settle in this area now called Southwest Michigan.

³ CONVENNG OUR COMMUNITY - <http://www.kzoo.edu/convene> - excerpts and author consolidations

In 1680 the first white men journeyed through
Prairie Ronde and Climax areas.



The Northwest Territory was awarded to the United States by the Treaty of Paris in 1783. As expansion occurred, the Congressional Ordinance of July 13, 1787 provided "there shall be formed in said territory, not less than three nor more than five states". Broken lines on the map on the following page defined the original boundaries and three "states": Eastern State (numbers 1,2,3,4), Middle State (numbers 5,6,7,8,9) and Western State (numbers 10,11,12,13,14,15).



The Indian Treaty of 1795 opened the Northwest Territory to Settlement and set aside the Match-e-b-nash-e-wish Reservation, a large portion of what was to become Kalamazoo County. Then the Indian Treaty of 1833 in part reads ARTICLE 3d “All the Indians residing on the said reservations in Michigan shall remove there from within three years from this date.”

Now, perhaps, one can almost see the tears from the elderly
Potawatomi woman as she stood on South Street
140 years ago – the Burr-Oak did!

According to Dr. Willis Dunbar’s *Kalamazoo and How it Grew* the first white resident of the area was probably a British fur trader named Burrell who in 1795 spent the winter at his trading post near what is now Riverside Cemetery. Others followed: Frenchman Numaiville and the 1st permanent Trading Post in 1828, Bazel Harrison another early settler in late 1828 and Titus Bronson on June 21, 1829.

Brady Township, partly comprising the 576 square miles representing what is now Kalamazoo County, was formed on November 15, 1829. However, its territory also included present day Barry County and all unorganized lands as far north as the Grand River. “Kalamazoo County”, as part of section 7 of the Territory’s Middle State was formed on July 30, 1830 and included what are now Eaton, Barry and Calhoun Counties.

In 1831 Kalamazoo County was sized to its current 576 square miles. The Town of Brunson was platted on March 12, 1831. Shortly after, Enoch Harris, the first African American settler, arrived June 30, 1831. Arcadia Township was then formed on July 30, 1831 overlaying the northern half of today’s Kalamazoo County with Brady Township following on October 5, 1831 covering the southern half.”

Prior to and Early in Our Community's History - B

"The village of Kalamazoo is beautifully situated at the great bend of the Kalamazoo River, about fifty miles from its mouth. The immediate site is a burr-oak plain, nearly level, and elevated sufficiently above the river-bed to give excellent drainage and furnish good basement and cellars. The soil of the plain is a dark, sandy loam, mixed with vegetable mold, resting upon a substratum of coarse gravel, in which is found an inexhaustible supply of most excellent water. The valley of the Kalamazoo is sunk below the general level of the country, at this point, about one hundred feet, the surface rising quite abruptly into picturesque bluffs, which spread away into the general level in all directions. The higher plateau is cut down in the immediate vicinity of the village by two small streams, known as Portage and Arcadia Creeks; the former taking its rise in the townships of Portage and Texas, in which it drains several small lakes, and the last named rising in the western part of the corporation. Near the northern line of the village two small streams, one on either side of the river, unite with the Kalamazoo." ⁴

Messrs. Burrell, Numaiville, Harrison, Bronson and the many other early settlers must have thought similarly. Of course, the first nation's people surely felt the same about their beautiful life-giving home. While one thinks about the continuous increased diversity and inclusion many individuals and businesses profess today, think about the following page 7 excerpts from the fall 2012 publication of the Kalamazoo Valley Museum – museON / Indian Archeology:

"Over the course of the first 50 – 75 years after American settlers arrived, virtually all of these archeological features were destroyed, usually by farmers expanding their fields. Line drawings and written accounts are all that remain. Even the mound in Bronson Park has been excavated and reconstructed so frequently - for a time, it was excavated and used as a root cellar to store vegetables for the County Jail - that it cannot be considered a genuine Native American structure."

The 1869 Kalamazoo County Directory described the construction of the River House in 1834. "In excavating for the cellar for this hotel, a great number of Indian skeletons and loose bones were met with which were thrown into the river"

"This location, near where the Michigan Avenue Bridge crosses the Kalamazoo River today, was one of at least three Native American burial grounds in the downtown area. Another was located on the northwest corner of Park Street and Kalamazoo Avenue, while a third was found on the northwest corner of Rose Street and Michigan Avenue. Beyond the disrespect shown for these cemeteries, the early residents destroyed potentially valuable archaeological evidence."

⁴ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 208 (JG).

“Modern methods and techniques, as well as a recognition of the importance of the precise location in which artifacts are found at an archaeological site, would not have been widely known in the early 19th century. Today, however, when these sites are encountered, scholars and researches work with native cultural groups to ensure respectful and careful exploration.”

The stage was now set for the creation and development of today's 15 townships, four cities and five villages in Kalamazoo County – see Appendix IX. During this time, the Town of Brunson was platted on March 12, 1831 and was succeeded by the recording of Bronson Village on March 27, 1834.

As a result of Congress expanding the three states of the Northwest Territory into six, the State of Michigan came into the Union in 1837. The Village of Kalamazoo then succeeded the Village of Bronson on December 26, 1844, as recorded on December 29, 1845 followed by the City of Kalamazoo in 1884.

The following section provides an understanding of how it became possible to identify these village structures and the ownership of properties within each.

Establishing Land Ownership Paths in the Territory

“Viewing the rural Midwest from an airplane reveals a grid-like pattern in the land. Fields are invariably rectangular and roads meet at right angles save where a geographic feature, like a river or a lake, intervenes.

This is not mere happenstance. It was the deliberate consequence of Congress’ decision in 1785 to survey the former Northwest Territory and stimulate the sale of those public lands. Further, Congress ordered that the survey map the land in such a fashion as to make it easy to locate and to know the boundaries of any individual parcel.

The idea of the rectilinear survey was derived from ideas Thomas Jefferson had proposed. Although he was serving as the young American government’s minister to France in 1785, Jefferson had chaired a commission set up by the Articles of Confederation Congress. Its charge was to create a land policy for the territories west of the Appalachians gained from Great Britain in the peace treaty of 1783 that ended the American Revolution.

Jefferson proposed that the survey divide the land into townships 10 miles square. Others believed this was too large and instead Congress decided on townships that were six miles square.

Townships would be divided into 36 sections, each one-mile square. The national government would sell the sections at \$1 per acre or \$640 per section. (One square-mile section equals 640 acres.)

Originally, however, Jefferson hoped to create a new decimal-based measuring approach to replace the English system of inches and feet, yards and rods, and acres. He had persuaded Congress to adopt such a system for the national currency in 1784, the system of dollars and cents still used today.

Congress and land-hungry settlers were too anxious to wait for the creation of a new and unfamiliar system. The national government had few sources of revenue other than land sales. It was deeply in debt to European governments and banks that had helped finance the Revolutionary War. Congress also owed money to Americans who had accepted government IOUs or the nearly worthless Continental currency.

Settlers, on the other hand, lusted for the rich lands of the Ohio Valley, lands to which they had been denied access as a result of the English government’s Proclamation of 1763, a significant factor in persuading the colonies to declare their independence. Settlers and surveyors were familiar with the English system and had the tools to mark out the land.

One such tool was the surveyor’s chain known as Gunter’s chain. Edmund Gunter, an Anglican priest, had devised it in the 17th century. The chain has 100 links (each 7.92 inches in length) and totals 22 yards or 66 feet. Eighty chains equal one mile. A parcel of land one chain long by ten chains wide equals an acre.

Feet, yards, miles, and acres – these were units of measure with which Americans were already familiar. Neither congressmen nor anxious settlers wanted to await the invention of a new measuring system.

In 1785, the survey of the Northwest Territory commenced where Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio now meet. Now designated a National Historic Landmark, it was fittingly known as the “Point of the Beginning.”

It would be several decades, not until 1815, that surveyors would start the survey of the Michigan Territory. Then, after the conclusion of the War of 1812, they began mapping the Lower Peninsula. They drew a hypothetical line from near Sault Ste. Marie to Defiance, Ohio. All townships would be marked off in vertical ranges, either east or west of this “meridian.” The meridian is 84 degrees 22 minutes 24 seconds West Longitude. (Writer’s note: the reference line was selected as the north-south line as defined in the 1807 Treaty of Detroit with the Michigan Native Americans – the line was surveyed by Benjamin Hough in April 1815.)

A second line, running along the northern boundary of the second tier of counties (Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, etc.) would be the “baseline” and townships correspondingly numbered north or south of it. At several points across the state, roads running along this line are still named “Baseline Road.” So, for example, Texas Township is known as Township 3 South (of the baseline) in Range 12 West (of the meridian). Every township in Michigan can similarly be located using this reference system and every one-mile-square section of land, or fraction thereof, can be precisely pinpointed.

As a result, it’s fair to say that Jefferson’s ideas for a rectilinear survey of the Northwest Territory make it easier for us today to know where we are going and where are homes are.”⁵

“This mathematical rectangular division of the land is in stark contrast to the method used to delineate land in the original 13 colonies, which was based on land features and topography. This method, in turn, was derived from the Old World practice in which a Monarch would lay claim to a large quantity of land and issue “Land Grants” to various nobles and privileged people wherein the boundaries were often defined as following a river, or a mountain ridge, or as lines between prominent features easily seen when on the property.”⁶

There are more than a thousand congressional or survey townships in Michigan, **not to be confused** with political townships. The northern most is Keweenaw County’s Houghton Township, home township to the north east corner of Isle Royal National Park

⁵ Kalamazoo Valley Museum Museography Volume 7, Issue 3, Summer 2008; kvm.kvcc.edu/info/museON/museographies/Muse_XXI-jefferson_web.pdf

⁶ John Willyard <http://farmington-mi.patch.com/articles/surveying-michigans-land-part-1>

T67N R34W, the southern most is Camden Township, Hillsdale County T9S R4W, eastern most Port Huron Township, St. Clair County T7N R17E and the western most Ironwood Township, Gogebic County T49N R48W.

In Kalamazoo County **S15 T2S R11W** identifies a tract of land 36 square miles square in the diagram below, which happens to be today's location of the City of Kalamazoo, City of Parchment and Kalamazoo Township, the congressional or survey town of Kalamazoo. There are more than a thousand survey townships in Michigan, not to be confused with political townships, which may consist of several survey townships.

Congressional or Survey Towns

Alamo	Cooper	Richland	Ross
Oshtemo	Kalamazoo	Comstock	Charleston
Texas	Portage	Pavilion	Climax
Prairie Ronde	Schoolcraft	Brady	Wakeshma

Each survey town is divided into thirty-six sections each being approximately one square mile.

Congressional or Survey Town of Kalamazoo

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36

Each section contains 640 acres and each are always numbered back-and-forth beginning with one in the northeast corner of the township and ending with thirty-six in the southeast corner of the township. The preceding diagram shows the numbering of sections within a congressional township. **S15 T2S R11W** identifies a unique square mile in a section, which in the example is the general area of Downtown Kalamazoo.

In turn, each 640-acre section is divided into fourths (160 acres), again into fourths (40 acres), and again into fourths (ten acres). The following diagram provides an example with the highlighted **SW¹/₄ S15 T2S R11W** from the above diagram, being two 80-acre tracts constituting the historical Plat of Brunson and what now is the **core** of Downtown Kalamazoo:

Section 15 - 640 acre square mile

NW ¹ / ₄		NE ¹ / ₄
W ¹ / ₂ SW ¹ / ₄	E ¹ / ₂ SW ¹ / ₄	SE ¹ / ₄

In Appendix IX, one can see the County's present 24 units of governments (25 including Kalamazoo County Government) situated on 576 square miles (16 congressional towns x 36 square miles each).

In 1829 – 1830 the first United States patents were received in **S15 T2S R11W**. Therefore, there were no tax rolls for parcels owned in the County for some time after and, therefore no property taxes. In contrast today, the Kalamazoo County Equalization Department indicates that 105,106 taxable parcels exist in the County today. The department indicates 7,907 are commercial, industrial and utility owned personal properties. In addition and because they are untaxed, the Department suggests there are also approximately 2,000 to 3,000 tax-exempt parcels – religious, public, charitable, etc. From zero to 110,000 or so parcels over 180 years is quite a change although very visible.

If one knows where to begin, each of those parcels can be traced back to a U.S. patent and all subsequent property splits can then be tracked forward in the Clerk/Register of Deed's office. As it happens, that office is located in the County Administration Building situated at the southwest corner of Rose Street and West Kalamazoo Avenue about 2/3rds of the way up on the line separating the two 80 acre tracts in the highlighted preceding drawing lying in the **SW¼ S15 T2S R11W**.

County Clerk-Register of Deeds Timothy Snow is the statutory holder of the libers or public records for all Kalamazoo County land transactions. Importantly, if one has an abstract, the ownership path of all transfers, grants, other records, as well as court actions, liens and encumbrances, one can then trace the ownership path of their parcel. However, many abstracts have over time either disappeared through family changes or with the advent of title insurance issued during property transactions, to the buyer.

Land Ownership Path to 1867 Corporation Hall

Within the east 80 acres of **SW¼ S15 T2S R11W**: “The original lots for Corporation Hall were 1.25 chains wide (N&S) by 2.5 chains deep (E&W) or 82.5 feet wide by 165 feet deep. However the original plat was recorded before Corporation Alley was established. The current legal description is part of Lots 222 & 223 with the width being 66 feet and the depth being 156.75 feet. The alley is stated at 19.8 feet wide. If half the alley (9.9 feet) were from each adjoining lot, this would put the measurement at 166.65 feet for the full lot and not 165 feet. Given these lots were originally platted in the 1800’s and knowing survey methods of the day... this is an acceptable, though not preferred, degree of inaccuracy.”⁷

Writer’s note: Lots 98 and 99 on which the 1867 Corporation Hall was subsequently constructed in the two initial plats of the Town of Brunson and then Village of Bronson, were aligned north and south. The next plat of the Village of Kalamazoo (1844) changed the alignment to east and west. This will be seen over the next several pages where the lots are clearly seen in the plat diagrams.

“Bazel Harrison was the first permanent white settler in what is now Kalamazoo County. ~ His uncle, Benjamin Harrison, was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. His cousin, William Henry Harrison, achieved fame by defeating the Indians at the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811, and was later elected to the presidency of the United States in the famous log cabin and hard cider campaign of 1840. He died after only a month in office, but his grandson, Benjamin Harrison, was elected president in 1888. ~ Apparently persuaded by the glowing report of his brother, Bazel Harrison sold his holdings in Ohio and set out for Michigan Territory on September 28, 1828. ~ Over a month after they had left their former home in Ohio, the members of the party emerged from the woods and stood enraptured on the southeastern boarder of Prairie Ronde in Kalamazoo County (see survey town 31 in the first of the two prior diagrams). The sight of this immense island of green in the midst of the forest primeval must have been awe-inspiring to Bazel Harrison and his companions. ~

The early settlers of Prairie Ronde, during the winter of 1829-1830, played host to a somewhat eccentric fellow named Titus Bronson, who was dreaming of establishing a town a dozen or so miles north of the little nucleus of settlement on the prairie. Probably they thought he would be wiser to start his town near-by, but Bronson had other plans.”⁸

“He spent much of his time traveling in Ohio and Michigan searching for the ideal place for his county seat. Founding a county seat was one of the most ambitious, prestigious and lucrative goals an entrepreneur could achieve during the first half of the nineteenth

⁷ Andrew W.X Falkenberg, MAAO, GISS Property Mapping Specialist, City of Kalamazoo. Kalamazoo and How it Grew, Dr. Willis Dunbar 1959 (WMU file 514 .K1 D8 C.8 pgs 30, 33)

⁸ Kalamazoo and How it Grew, Dr. Willis Dunbar 1959 (WMU file 514 .K1 D8 C.8 pg 30)

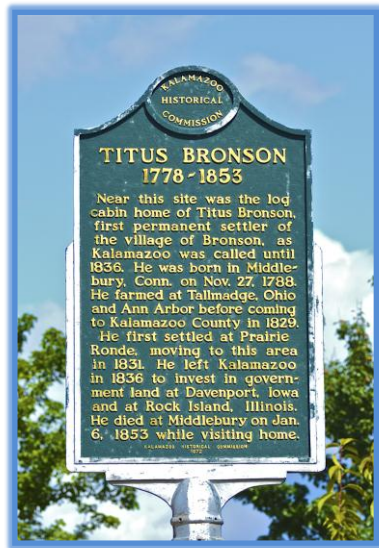
century. City building was a risky do-it-yourself activity that required much nurturing, planning and perseverance.

In January (the 1st according to Dr. Willis Dunbar - *Kalamazoo and how it Grew* - WMU) 1827 at the age of 38, Titus Bronson married a widow, Sally Richardson, in his hometown of Middlebury, Connecticut.

In the spring of 1827 the newlyweds moved to Tallmadge, Ohio. There they started a family—a daughter, Eliza was born to them. In Bronson village, Sally Bronson gave birth to two children, a son who died in infancy, and another daughter, Julia. Both of the Bronson daughters married men from Illinois and lived their adult lives in that State.”⁹

“He had come to the area in the summer of 1829 by way of the old Indian trail from Ann Arbor, a trail which later became the Territorial Road and along which the Michigan Central Railroad was to be built. He forded the river at the trading post and continued along the trail until he reached the knoll, which we know today as the Indian mound in Bronson Park. Here he camped for the night, very close to where the City Hall now stands. The next day, after looking over the neighboring region, he determined to make this spot his home. He probably reasoned that it would be logical that a town would spring up around the crossing of the river, but why he thought it should be on the west side rather than the east side we cannot tell. He built a hut of tamarack poles (a claim shanty) covered with grass, and lived in it until cold weather set in.

(Writer’s note: According to Mr. George Torrey’s “History of Kalamazoo” published in 1867, this unpretentious mansion stood upon a knoll near what is now the corner of Church and Water Streets, which is near the centre of the west half of the southwest quarter of section 15, on the east side of the west 80-acre tract.)



Kalamazoo Historical Commission
Plaque dated 1972 located on Park and
Water Street on the north part of the
property, which is home to the Chamber
of Commerce and First National Bank of
Kalamazoo one block-length west of the
original homestead site on the bank of
Arcadia Creek.

Writer’s Electronic image, Nikon D-7000
AF Micro-Nikkor 105mm f/2.8D Lens

⁹ Kalamazoo Centennial Program and a Historical Review 1829 – 1929 pgs. 9-11 / (WMU file 574.K1K32xC-2 RHC)

Then he made his way southward to the settlement started by Harrison and others on Prairie Ronde and stayed there during the winter. In the spring, he went to Ohio for his family. He brought his wife and daughter and his brother-in-law, Stephen Richardson, back with him in the summer of 1830 by covered wagon. Because Mrs. Bronson was ill, he took his family to live with his friends on Prairie Ronde during the following winter.

Early in the spring of 1831, Bronson returned and built a log house, located at what is now the northwest corner of Michigan Avenue and Church Street.” ~ ¹⁰



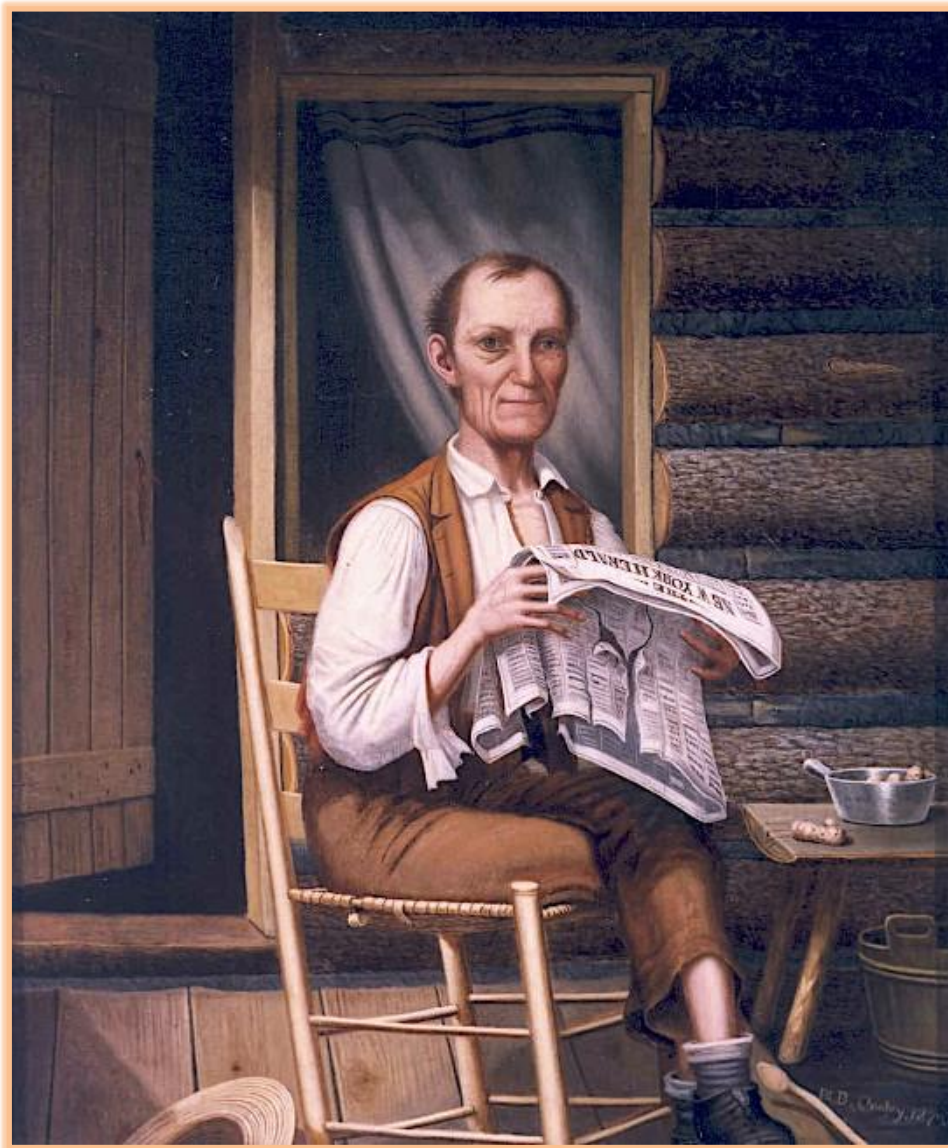
“Kalamazoo in 1832”

Oil Painting by Anthony Cooley - 1857

File #290 electronic scan graciously provided by the Kalamazoo Valley Museum

¹⁰ Kalamazoo and How it Grew, Dr. Willis Dunbar 1959 (WMU file 514 .K1 D8 C.8 pg 33)

“Titus Bronson” – 1879 Oil Painting by
Benjamin Cooley (Son of Anthony Cooley)
The Story goes that Mr. Cooley Painted Titus Bronson
based on His Childhood Memories of Bronson
Electronic Scan Graciously provided by the Kalamazoo Valley Museum
Catalogue # 70.85



Given the meanderings of Titus the following is noted: "Pioneer men like Titus Bronson had the opportunity to range over the wilderness enjoying the richness of the wildlife and scenery. Pioneer women like Sally Bronson had to toil indoors, often in crude cabins bereft of windows, deprived not only of friends and neighbors, but even of the simple joy of looking at the sunlight and enjoying the seasons. Pioneer women, at times, lived hideously hard lives. Their husbands, whose stories have dominated the history of the westward movement, were very dependent on their wives for emotional and physical support. – " I never do anything without consulting her," – wrote Hector St. John de Crevecoeur of his wife in *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782). The same was true of Titus Bronson. It was his wife who possessed the good business sense and acumen. When Titus went to the land office in Monroe to purchase his Kalamazoo County lands he put the deeds in his wife's name." ¹¹

"Although Titus Bronson was the first settler, the noteworthy distinction of building the first house in what is today Kalamazoo belongs to William Harris. In the spring of 1830, Harris, who was also Bronson village's first black settler, built a "shed-roof" log cabin for his wife and three children on a site where Westnedge and Water Street intersect. A shed-roof log cabin was composed of poles slanted in one direction covered with marsh grass. The cabin had an earth floor. In cold or damp weather blankets and shawls were hung against the windows and doors." ¹²

While the writer was not able to corroborate Mr. Harris being the first African American settler in the Village through the Kalamazoo Valley Museum, since the Bronson's did not winter over at the site near the present-day intersection of Kalamazoo and Westnedge Avenues, the 1829 – 1929 Kalamazoo Centennial Program provided the distinction of building that first Village house to William Harris.

Dr. Willis Dunbar Sets the Stage for the Early Growth of the Village and of Corporation Hall

"Kalamazoo was a boom town in the 1830's. It was by no means the only boomtown in Michigan. In fact there was a kind of Michigan mania, which swept the country. The better land in southern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois had been taken up by the tremendous influx of settlers following the War of 1812. The large prairies of northern Illinois were for a time avoided by the pioneers because of lack of timber and the difficult of plowing. All at once, the rich potentialities of southern Michigan seemed to have been discovered. Movement into Michigan was immensely facilitated by the opening of the Erie Canal in New York in 1824. The sons and daughters of New Englanders who had settled in New York after the American Revolution were now seeking new homes for themselves and greater opportunity." ¹³

¹¹ Kalamazoo Centennial Program and a Historical Review 1829 – 1929 p 11

¹² Kalamazoo Centennial Program and a Historical Review 1829 – 1929 p 16-17

¹³ Kalamazoo and How it Grew, Dr. Willis Dunbar, 1959 pg 39

**Table Showing
Ownership Path to Corporation Hall ^{14 15}**

Date	West 80 Acres	East 80 Acres
11-1-1830	Stephen R. Richardson located an 80 acre parcel that being the west ½ of the SW quarter of section 15 range 11 town 2	Titus Bronson et al located an 80 acre parcel that being the east ½ of the SW quarter of section 15 range 11 town 2
3-12-1831	Mr. Richardson and Titus Bronson recorded a “Plat of the Village of Brunson”	
6-1-1831	United States issues patent to Mr. Richardson for the West ½ of the SW quarter of section 15 range 11, town 2	United States issues patent to Titus Bronson for the East ½ of the SW quarter of section 15 range 11, town 2
Land Ownership Path will continue		

The November 1, 1830 ***Plat of the Town of Brunson*** can be viewed on the following page. It is a drawing to scale of what is now downtown Kalamazoo, as copied and then photographed from the Kalamazoo County Clerk-Register of Deeds liber A page 5, as granted by Richard Stephenson and Titus Bronson et al to the town in March 1831.

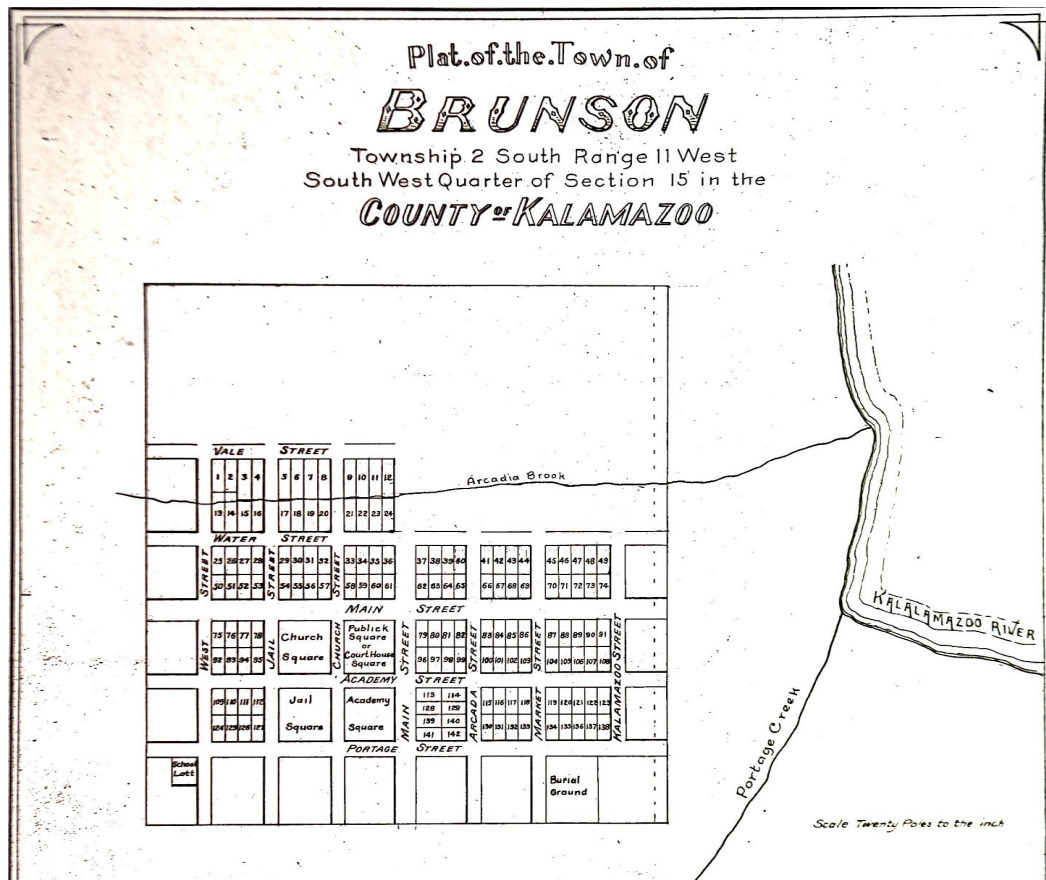
“In liber A, page 8 of the records in the county register’s office we find the original plat of the “Village of Bronson”, entered of record on the 12th day of March, 1831 by Titus Bronson and Stephen H. Richardson. It was acknowledged before William Duncan, a justice of the peace on the same day. This plat included about twenty squares, and covered substantially all of the southwest quarter of section 15.” ¹⁶

¹⁴ Each of the land transactions in the above table for the West 80 acres is from public record within the first three and fifth paragraphs of County Corporate Counsel Duane Triemstra’s November 11, 1997 Opinion, relative to the Rotary Stage in Bronson Park. Mr. Triemstra’s opinion relies on research and the opinion of attorney James Geary dated November 15, 1979 relating to vendor sales on both Bronson Park and County Courthouse properties. Entries for the West 80 acres beyond June 1881 are separately referenced.

¹⁵ The land ownership path for each of the land transactions in the above table for the East 80 acres were kindly made available by Mr. George Amar, Commercial Sales Manager, Attorneys Title Agency, as a gift to this history.

¹⁶ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 211/ (JG)

The two 80 acre parcels, each $\frac{1}{4}$ mile wide (east and west) and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in length (north and south), are divided by a north/south sectional line running through the middle of what is now Rose Street (formerly Main Street in the earliest days). The section line continues to the north boundary line of the $\frac{1}{4}$ section just past the present Amtrak rails and within or a few feet south of Dr. Martin Luther King Memorial Park. There, another survey line runs east and west defining the northern boundary of the **SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 15**. To the south, the line runs to what is now South Street, which forms the southern boundary of the **SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 15**. Notice the spelling of Bronson? It might have been a misunderstanding of the mathematician creating the drawing.



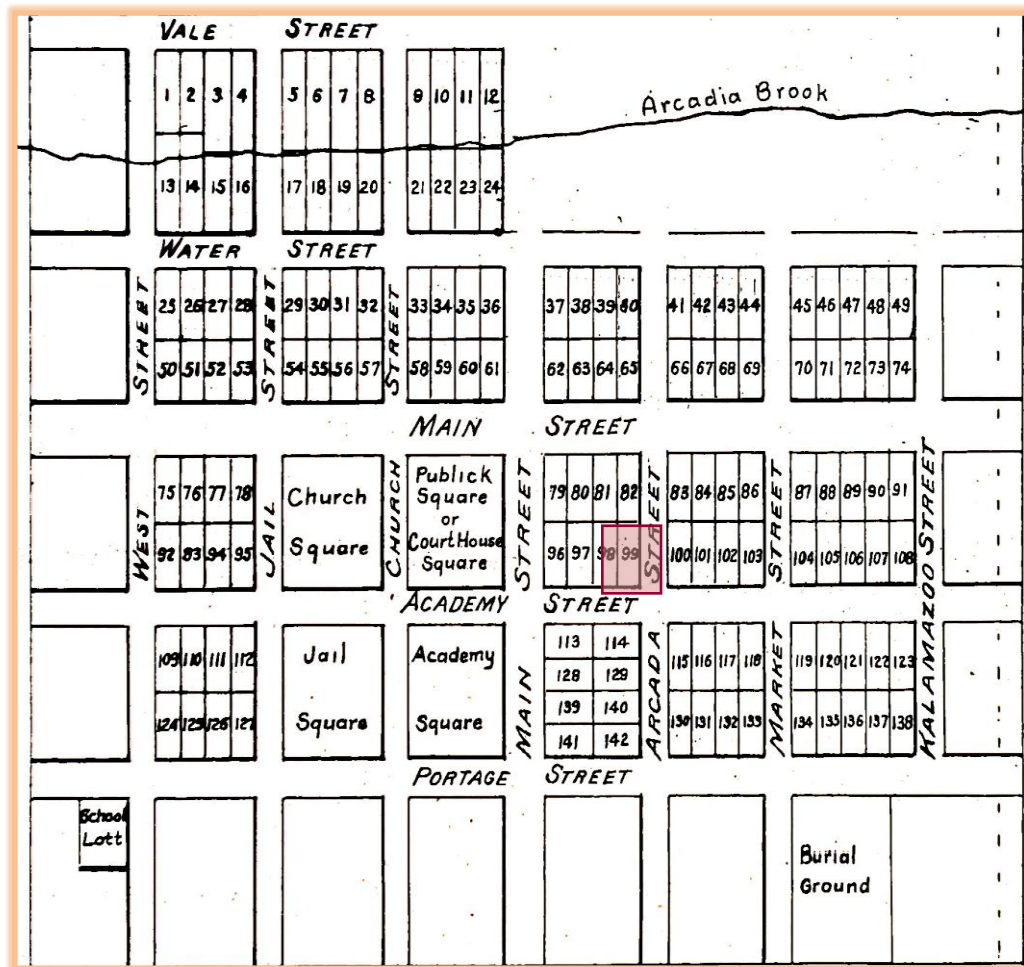
Plat of the Town of Brunson

This and further plat images are electronic writer images of plat copies Graciously provided by Kalamazoo County Clerk-Register of Deeds Timothy Snow
Nikon D-7000 – Nikkor AF-S 24.0-120.0mm 1:4 G ED Lens

The recorded Plat states that the Public Square or Court House Square, the Jail Square and the Academy Square were 16 rods square and were “appropriated for the use and the benefit of the County.” The Jail Square and the Academy Square make up what is now known as “Bronson Park.

An enlargement of the Town of Brunson follows. For orientation purposes, where original street names no longer exit, the transition below for the two 80 acre parcels will be helpful:

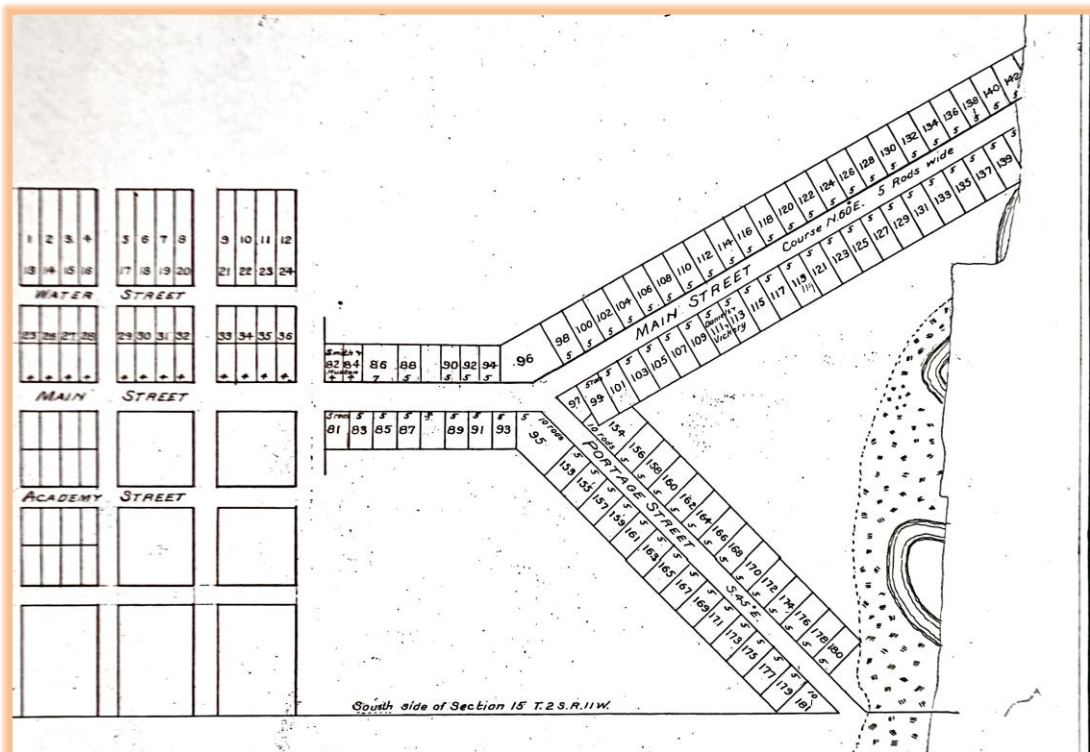
Vale is now Eleanor	Main n/s is now Rose	Market is now Burdick
West is now Westnedge	Jail changed to Park	Kalamazoo to Farmer's Alley
Main e/w to Michigan	Portage to Lovell	Academy ends at Rose



Most if not all of the lots initially platted and their number assignment have been reconfigured over the last 182 years. The present day lots 222 and 223, which are home to the 1867 and 2013 Corporation Halls are configured, approximately, within the initial lots 98 and 99 (highlighted in transparent red text box in the preceding image); placing them just behind or east of the present Comerica Building.

Continued Land Ownership Path

Date	West 80 Acres	East 80 Acres
12-6-1831		Titus Bronson and wife Sally granted a warranty deed to Justus Burdick for the entire 80 acres forming one half of the initial 160-acre plat.
3-27-34		Titus Bronson et al recorded lots 46-60 in the Village of Bronson, which then platted the Y encompassing West Michigan and Portage Street east to the southwest quarter section line, which follows below.
Land Ownership Path will continue		



“On the 27th of August 1832, there seems to have been a new plat made, covering about the same ground. This was recorded on the 7th of March 1834, but is accompanied by no acknowledgement, and shows no names of proprietors. It is called a plat of the “Village of Bronson.”¹⁷

While the footnote 13 on page 31 leaves a question, the public record confirms that the Y was platted in the east side of the east 80 acres extending the platted area down to approximately today’s Porter Street intersection with Kalamazoo Avenue.

“The second 1834 plat shows Main Street, as it was then called, veering northeast in front of the hotel with a new street called Portage turning off in a southerly direction at the same place as it does today. It was generally understood that this change was made so that the main roads would converge at the Kalamazoo House. This alteration of Bronson’s original plat has created no end of difficulties for engineers who seek to solve Kalamazoo’s traffic problems in the automobile age.”¹⁸

“According to reliable data, Bronson purchased land on Prairie Ronde, which he afterwards (between 1831 and 1834) exchanged with his brother-in-law, Richardson, for the latter’s eighty acres on the site of Kalamazoo *

Richardson deeded to Sally Bronson, January 5, 1833, the west half of the southwest quarter of **section15**, township 2, range 11. Consideration, \$1,000.”¹⁹

Continued Land Ownership Path

Date	West 80 Acres	East 80 Acres
1-5-1833	Mr. Richardson and his wife executed a Warranty Deed to Sally Bronson, wife of Titus Bronson, transferring the west 80 acres with the exception of Streets and Squares in the Village of “Bronson”.	
Land Ownership Path will continue		

¹⁷ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 211/ (JG)

¹⁸ Kalamazoo and How it Grew, Dr. Willis Dunbar, 1959 p 41 (WMU)

¹⁹ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 211/ (JG)

“According to the report of the commissioners appointed to locate the county-seat, it appears that Mr. Bronson promised, in the event of its being located on his land, that he would lay out a village, and place upon the records a map of the same, and would donate ample lands for county purposes; also for the use of the common schools and academy, for a public burial-ground, and for the use of the first four Christian denominations which should erect houses of worship. These donations included what is now called Bronson Park (remember that Sally was the deed holder).



Electronic Image of Bronson Park Graciously Provided by
Kalamazoo Valley Museum – image KVM img544

The agreement was faithfully observed and to Titus Bronson the village is indebted for its beautiful public grounds and broad and liberal streets and square, which are the pride of its citizens, and the wonder and admiration of strangers. These peculiar and pleasant features really give the “Big Village” its prominence abroad, and make it one of the most charming towns in the Union. The subsequent treatment of its liberal founder was by no means justified by any act or misdemeanor of his, and he finally abandoned the beautiful spot so wisely chosen for a home, a disappointed and sorrowful man, to wander a few years, and then return to his former home in Ohio to die in poverty and obscurity.”²⁰

²⁰ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 211/ (JG)

The more historical part of the west 80 acres has now been set, i.e. the Courthouse, Bronson Park and church properties, as each were practically a stone's throw from the 1867 site of Corporation Hall. In addition, the relationship interconnection between the Bronson and Richardson families show how they brought the initial plat together with their ownership of the two 80 acre parcels in the **SW ¼ S15 T2S R11W**.

Writer's note: The United States Land Patents for Kalamazoo County, <http://file.usgwarchives.net/mi/kalamazoo/land/kalamazoo.txt>, were reviewed and below Patents for the three Bronson/Stephenson family are summarized. The site displayed the Bronson, Kalamazoo, Monroe and White Pigeon Prairie, Michigan U.S. Land Offices' Records for Kalamazoo County (a part of the Michigan Land Patents Database). The database shows the following land patents (ownerships) issued to the three relatives:

Congressional Township	Town Range	Sally Bronson	Titus Bronson	Stephen Richardson
Kalamazoo	2S / 11W	S5 65.98 acres		
Kalamazoo	2S / 11W	S8 40.00 acres		S15 80.00 acres
Kalamazoo	2S / 11W		S15 80.00 acres	
Kalamazoo	2S / 11W		S22 80.00 acres	
Kalamazoo	2S / 11W		S8 35.38 acres	
Kalamazoo	2S / 11W		S8 63.16 acres	
Kalamazoo	2S / 11W		S8 40.00 acres	
Kalamazoo	2S / 11W		S12 80.00 acres	
Kalamazoo	2S / 11W		S4 80.00 acres	
Oshtemo	2S / 12W		S10 40.00 acres	
Climax	3S / 9W		S1 171.40 acres	
Prairie Ronde	4S / 12W		S14 80.00 acres	
Prairie Ronde	4S / 12W		S15 80.00 acres	
Prairie Ronde	4S / 12W			S14 80.00 acres
Prairie Ronde	4S / 12W			S17 80.00 acres
Total		105.98 acres	929.94 acres	240.00 acres
Transfer to Sally 1-5-1833		S15 80.00 acres		(S15 80.00) acres
Total		185.98 acres	929.94 acres	160.00 acres

While the history shows that Titus Bronson (see footnote 20 on the preceding page) in exchange for promises to site the County Seat in Kalamazoo, "appeared to promise" the dedication of Jail, Academy, Church and Courthouse squares, it is clear from the history Sally Bronson was, indeed, the deed holder, having purchased the west 80 acres of the quarter section for \$1,000 in January (see footnote 19).

Going down the list, the 105.98 acres patented to Sally lie generally in the northwest part of the congressional town of Kalamazoo (S5 & S8) in the area of and north of Alamo Ave. Titus also received patents for 139.54 acres in the same area. Titus also received a patent for 80 acres in S4 just east of the above-mentioned patents. Titus

further received a patent for 40 acres in S10 of the congressional town of Oshtemo, the current home section of the writer. Titus also received patents for 117.14 acres in S1 located east of the Village of Climax. In appendix II page 63 just after footnote 35, the sale of land to Cyrus Lovell is noted. While the writer did not track the land path thereto, it is sufficient to assume Mr. Lovell did, indeed purchase it from Titus. The data base then speaks to patents for 160 acres to Titus in Prairie Ronde congressional township S4 and to Sally's brother, Richard Stephenson, for 160 acres in S2 & S4 of that congressional town.

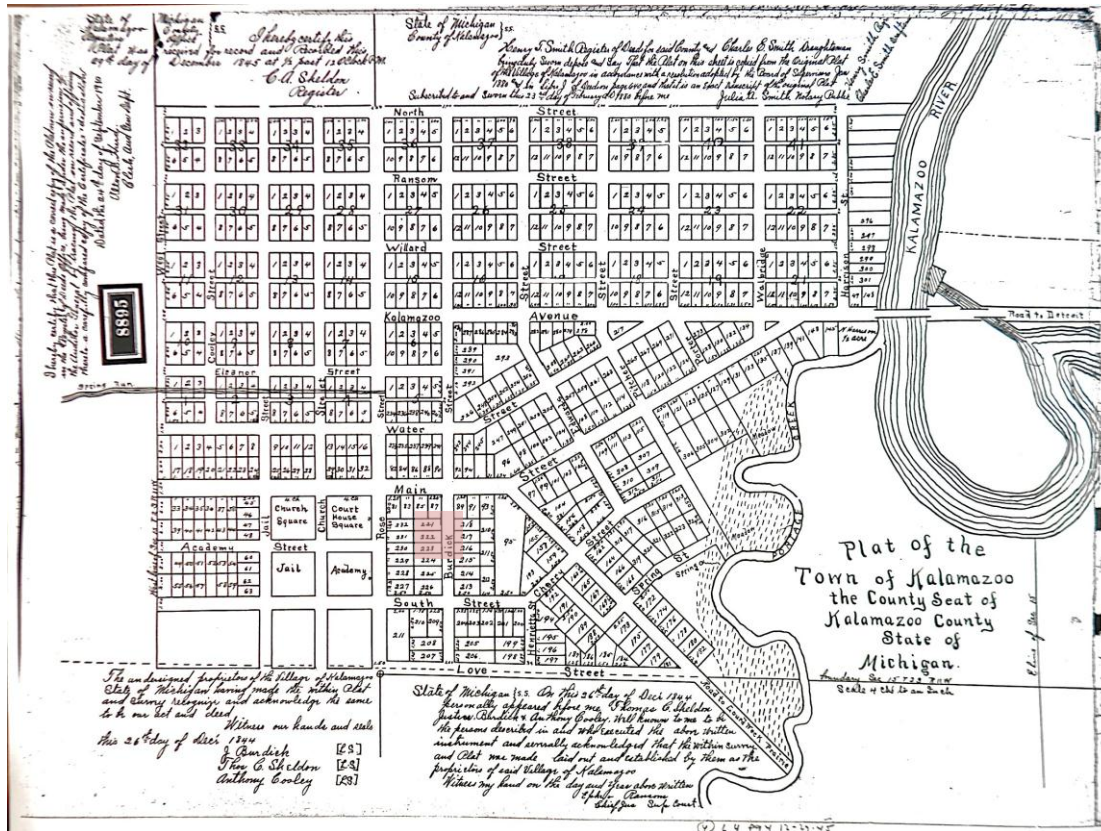
History notes that Titus exchanged his acreage for the W 80 acres of S15, that being the 80 acres, however the Register of Deeds records are clear that it was deeded to Sally in exchange for \$1,000; again see footnote 19.

It would have been interesting to trace the land paths of each of the holdings up to the current time, but that was left to others where in the non-urban area it might be easy if abstracts are mostly current. It would likely be more difficult in the urban areas of Kalamazoo.

Moving on:

The Territory of Michigan was an organized incorporated territory of the United States that existed from June 30, 1805, when the final extent of the territory was admitted to the Union on January 26, 1837, as the State of Michigan.		
2-3-1840		Thomas C. Sheldon and his wife executed a warranty deed to Justus Burdick.
12-26-1844		Thomas C. Sheldon et al records plat for the Village of Kalamazoo.
12-26-1844		Justus Burdick et al records Plat of Town of Kalamazoo – see following page.
Land Ownership Path will continue		

Plat of the Town of Kalamazoo



"The beginning of the year 1831 was most propitious for the new settlement at the "great bend of the Ke-Knamazoo." On the 15th of January the commissioners appointed to locate the county seat reported in favor of the "Village of Bronson," and on the 2nd of April, Governor Cass set his official seal to an approval of their choice.

The official proclamation finally fixing the county seat was issued on the 12th of May following, by Stevens T. Mason, Secretary and sitting Governor of the Territory of Michigan.

From this time dates the beginning of a long and prosperous career for one of the finest villages in the land. The generous donations made by Mr. Bronson most probably had great influence inducing the commissioners to fix upon the place. At all events, the fact accomplished made the future of the pioneer-village bright with promise, and eventually concentrated here the greatest accumulation of wealth and population in Southwestern Michigan.

In the early part of the year 1831, Bronson returned to his new village from Prairie Ronde, and on the 12th of March he and Richardson placed upon record their plat of the village of Brunson, as before stated.

The knowledge of the action of the Governor and the platting of the village was soon spread far and wide, and the settlement increased quite rapidly.

Prominent among the arrivals of this year was that of Gen. Justus Burdick. By his advice Gen. Burdick came here, as stated, in the fall of 1831. He was so well pleased with the place and surrounding country that he soon after purchased of Titus Bronson the east half of the southwest quarter of section 15, with the exception of lots which Bronson had sold to Smith & Huston and Chauncey Merwin, paying for the same \$850.”²¹

“The sale made by Bronson to Burdick closed out his interest in the village, until January 5, 1833 when his wife (Sally) became owner, by deed from Richardson (brother), of the west half of the southwest quarter of section 15, immediately adjoining the tract sold to Burdick. In the year following, Titus and Sally Bronson placed on record the third “Plat of the Village of Bronson,” with some alterations from the former and embracing the west half of the southwest quarter of section 15. The date of record is Aug. 14, 1834.”²²

The Cyclone Interrupts the Village

“The year 1834 was also remarkable for a disastrous tornado, or cyclone, which passed over Bronson on the afternoon of October 18th. It approached the village by way of the narrow valley of Arcadia Creek, and seemed to deploy, as it debouched upon the plain, like a charging column into line of battle, and swept with terrific violence over the frightened hamlet. We copy a description of its progress and effects from the history of the town published in the county directory for 1869:

The western sky suddenly assumed a strange and awful appearance; a reddening shadow mantled the earth, a warm gust of wind swept over the valley, and then a peculiar whistling sound was heard, while above, the contorted clouds put on more awful shapes. Presently the moaning of the wind, the sudden shaking and swaying of the trees, the glistening of the leaves, abruptly smitten and upturned against the darkened sky, in the narrow valley of the Arcadia, west of the village, gave the first evidences of the wild rush of the swooping tornado. It's movement, swifter than the flight of swiftest bird, was singular and hideously sportive in its character. In width it was hardly more than a hundred feet, yet it would rise and fall, now turn to the right, then to the left; here skimming over a house or tree, there sweeping away impediments as though they were gossamer.”²³

²¹ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 213 / (JG)

²² History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 214 / (JG)

²³ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 217 / (JG)

146 Years Later
A Tornado's Havoc was Created Again
Nearly Along the Same Path

Happening upon the above reference brought back the memory of being in the County Administration Building on West Kalamazoo Avenue in the midst of a County Board of Commissioner's Finance Committee budget meeting in the second floor Board of Commissioner's offices. Two cries went out that a tornado was coming and yet the dozen or so of us hardly blinked. When the third **yell** came we scattered quickly. However, happening to have the Nikon that day, it was quickly pointing out Dave Kirby's west window framing the dastardly tornado roaring down West Main Hill. After a quick few frames from the Nikon, the rain hit quickly and with Dave tugging at the belt, away we went to the basement level.

Several minutes later when things subsided, the Nikon went south on Church and rounding the corner to West Michigan could not believe what its lens was seeing – much sorrow! The huge Courthouse Oaks and then Bronson Park – my oh my!

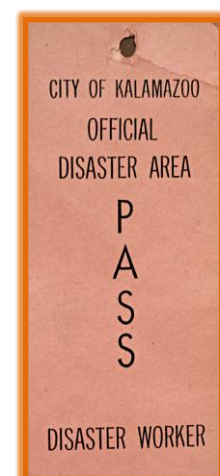
The following page's writer images bring back those tragic natural, human and economically devastating and sorrowful memories:

County Administration Building
Writer's Image from County Administrator, David Kirby's,
Second Floor Northwest Office



The writer's Nikon captured fourteen or so dozen images of the destruction that day throughout the Corporation Hall area of the two **SW¼ S15** 80-acre tracts

The above and following image are part of that collection



Bronson Park May 30, 1980
Spanish American War, Philippine Insurrection and
the China Relief Expedition 1898
Standing His Ground Amongst the Burr-Oaks from Village Times
With the Chainsaws' Ripping and their Suffocating Exhaust



Also see West Michigan and Rose Maple Tree
Related Story in Appendix X A

Still Standing his ground – September 12, 2012
With Clear Air and Bright Skies, but no Massive Burr-Oaks



Two years later after the 1836, out of season, “cyclone” the name of the Village no longer carried Titus’ namesake:

“Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Michigan,* that from and after the thirty-first day of March, instant, the name of the township of Arcadia, in the county of Kalamazoo, shall be changed and altered to that of Kalamazoo; and also the name of the village of Bronson shall be changed and hereafter known and called Kalamazoo, any law to the contrary notwithstanding. “Approved March 24, 1836.”

By these proceedings Titus Bronson felt that he had been deeply wronged, and he only remained for a short time subsequent to the change. The blow fell heavily upon him, and from that time he seems to have lost courage, and in the course of a few years, during which he wandered over many of the States, his property passed from his possession, and he is said to have died in straitened circumstances.

His memory seems to have been brushed away, and about the only remembrance of the pioneer who founded this beautiful village is the somewhat uncertain appellation bestowed upon the park. Not even a street bears his name, though nearly every one of the early settlers are honored in this regard. The name Kalamazoo is more musical and pleasing than Bronson; but, though we may acquiesce in the change, it cannot be denied that it was doing him an injustice to make it.”²⁴

“This portion of the village plat owned by his wife was mostly conveyed by Titus and Sally Bronson to parties, in lots, during the two or three following years. Bronson must have left Kalamazoo early in 1836, soon after the name of the village was changed.”²⁵

“The various plats and additions, which have been made and put upon record since 1831 number over 60. The area is two and one-half miles square, covering the equivalent of 61/4 sections, or exactly 4,000 acres. Five-sixths of the present village lie within the Indian reservation, -- *Matcheбенashewish*.

²⁴ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 220 / (JG)

²⁵ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 224/ (JG)

Nearly all the business portions of the village are included within the limits of **section 15**, and much of the heaviest portion is situated on the southwest quarter of the same section. The eastern portions of **sections 15** and 22 (22 is immediately south of 15 with Portage Creek co-joining the two sections on its way to the "Great Bend") include low grounds lying on both sides of Portage Creek and along the west bank of the Kalamazoo River. The western and northwestern margins extend over the bluffs which everywhere in the county border the river valley."²⁶

Seven years after the Village of Bronson was renamed Village of Kalamazoo by the State of Michigan Senate and House of Representatives, it was incorporated as the Village of Kalamazoo in 1843. Its first Village President was Hosea B. Huston with the following image from kpl.gov/local-history/government/village-presidents.aspx, as compiled by Kris Rzepczynski, former KPL staff member, 1998. Last updated 18 November 2005.



"In 1840 Kalamazoo was still a backwoods town. But during the next two decades, the community founded by Titus Bronson came out of the wilderness and was linked in many ways with the outside world. The improvement of transportation and communication facilities was vital to the growth of the town.".....

"Protection against fire received early attention from the trustees. Ordinance number six, passed on June 5, 1843 required all householders or occupants of dwellings, stores, ships and offices to furnish themselves with one suitable ladder or ladders of sufficient length to ascend from the ground to the roof of the building. "Five prominent citizens were appointed as fire-wardens in 1844." "Early in 1846, the first volunteer fire company came into existence. It was called "Kalamazoo Hook and Ladder Company No. 1." "A petition in 1846 suggested the need of a fire engine.".....

²⁶ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 225 / (JG)

“In December 1853, the village’s first fire engine, was delivered. It cost, with 200 feet of hose, \$1,050. It was given to the care of a new volunteer fire company called “Burr-Oak Engine Company No. 2.” “A second fire-engine was acquired in 1854. This one, called “The Cataract” was given into the charge of “Excelsior Fire Engine Company No. 2.””In 1860, a third fire-engine was acquired, and a new volunteer company, the “Germania” was formed to operate it.” “The only full-time employee of the village in the ‘40s and ‘50s was the marshal. He appears to have been a man-of-all-work. By all odds, the most active and energetic of these early marshals was Alexander J. Sheldon. Judging from the accounts which have survived the years, this fellow was really a ball of fire.”

Dr. Dunbar goes on to explain how the town grew with sidewalks, the first improvements to Bronson Park, culverts and storm sewers in the streets, as well as Mr. Sheldon’s origination and promotion of Fireman’s Hall until he moved back to Buffalo to become its Public Library’s Librarian. Dr. Dunbar gives thanks to Mr. Sheldon on it being probable that this energetic village employee’s impetus caused the village trustees in 1854 to make both squares (Jail and Academy squares) into a park.

Poignantly with regard to the Land Ownership Path on the west 80 acres of the SW ¼ Dr. Dunbar notes:

“The village leased the two squares from the county in 1854 for ten years with the provision that the area be used as a public park and maintained as such by the village. In 1864 the lease was renewed for ninety-nine years.” ²⁷

Continuing his discussion of growth, Dr. Dunbar notes that in 1840 the population of Kalamazoo probably had about one thousand inhabitants; and by 1850 the United States census enumerated 2,550 persons and ten years later the town had grown by another 4,000.

Continued Land Ownership Path

Date	West 80 Acres	East 80 Acres
2-24-1851	NA	Justus Burdick having passed away, the Auditor General was granted Administrator's Deeds for a variety of the Town lots, which included lots 222 and 223 amongst others on 10-15-1853.
thru		
12-12-1853		
Land Ownership Path will continue		

²⁷ Kalamazoo and How it Grew, Dr. Willis F. Dunbar, 1959 pgs 55, 65-67

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Settlement

“The celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the settlement of Kalamazoo took place under the auspices of the Ladies’ Library Association, on the 21st of June, 1854. The matter had been a subject of discussion for a considerable time by the association, and the celebration had been finally determined upon. Col. F. W. Curtenius (Village President, 1866 / 1867-1868 – writer’s note) was selected as orator, and Hon. E. Lakin Brown as poet for the occasion.

The arrangements comprehended a procession, music, speeches, toasts, and a public dinner to be spread in Fireman’s Hall. After dinner was over a great number of regular and volunteer toasts were offered and responded to in the happiest manner, the **Ladies’ Library Association** coming for a remarkable share of attention. In the course of his remarks Col. Curtenius alluded in feeling terms to the founder of the village, Titus Bronson.”²⁸

Ladies Library Association Relationship to Corporation Hall

The Ladies Library Association has a close relationship to the 1867 Corporation Hall, from its temporary quarters in the Village Hall and through the construction of its new 1878 facility by Bush and Patterson, which also constructed Corporation Hall. In part, the following attests to the Ladies Library Association temporary quarters. A business reference to Bush and Patterson can be found in Appendix V.

“This association was formed in 1852, through the efforts of several of the village ladies, and placed under the management of ten of their number, as executive officers. Mrs. Kedzie was chosen as the first president. The money paid as membership fees was expended in the purchase of books and renting a room for the use of the library. Public entertainments, tableaux, concerts, etc. were given, and all aided in increasing the funds. During six years succeeding April 1853, the association occupied one of the lower rooms in the courthouse, and from 1859 to 1868 one of the basement rooms of the Baptist church.

In the latter year it removed to Corporation Hall, where it remained until the fall of 1878, when it again occupied its former rooms in the Baptist church. The present elegant building, located on Park Street, was erected in 1878 by Messrs. Bush & Patterson, and cost, altogether, \$9,371.09. The contract price was \$8,000, of which \$2,000 was paid out of the building fund of the association, and \$3,000 from the citizens of the village in private donations.

²⁸ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 231-232/ (JG)

The balance of \$3,000 was borrowed, and a mortgage given on the building for the amount. Mrs. Ruth W. Webster donated the lot on which the building stands, and an elegant memorial window in her honor has been placed in the eastern end. It is built with brick, with cut-stone trimmings, is two stories high, with a tower 14 by 18 besides the portico. The woodwork, the very finest of its class, is in black ash (so prevalent then in the lower wet areas near the river and two creeks).²⁹

However, it was Lucinda Stone who brought the Association's movement forward (see Appendix VI) that portrays women's rights, as well as a related speech by Abraham Lincoln dated around the Civil War, which can be found in Appendix VII.

For Mrs. Stone's role with the Association and other efforts, Mrs. Stone's portrait adorns the Ladies Library Building first floor's south wall; the Kalamazoo Radisson's Stone Theater is named in her honor and a tribute to her lies in Bronson Park.

In conjunction with footnote 7, referring to Mr. Triemstra's November 11, 1997 opinion describing provisions relating to certain squares including Bronson Park, it is worth mentioning here the legal interrelationship of the initial villages to the County of Kalamazoo, which continues on today with the County and the City of Kalamazoo.

"In 1854 the two squares now constituting the park were leased to the village of Kalamazoo for the term of fifty years, for the purpose of being improved and ornamented as a public park. The west one had been occupied for jail purposes by the first jail constructed in the county. The east one had been occupied by an academy, and the building was then standing on the northeast corner. The two squares were known respectively as "Jail Square " and "Academy Square". The academy building was removed in 1857. At the expiration of this lease, in 1864, the grounds were again leased to the village for the same purposes for a period of ninety-nine years, dating from Jan. 8, 1865 (shortly after that the County assumed ownership of the properties).

There had been some claims advanced to this property by the heirs of Stephen H. Richardson, the original owner, and, to settle all difficulties, in 1856 the Board of Supervisors (County) appropriated and caused to be paid the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars, in full for all claims by the said heirs against the property. Hon. H. G. Wells settled the matter on behalf of the county and obtained the release. We believe these claims pertained only to that portion of the park known as "Academy Square."³⁰

²⁹ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 243-244/ (JG)

³⁰ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 109/ (JG)

The several preceding transactions were important to understand the growth in the county through today, but they were also important to many in order to “get our spatial bearings” related to early Kalamazoo and the Village’s first public structure, Corporation Hall. As time goes, on the Village of Brunson, perhaps a result of the individual drawing the first plat, changed to the Village of Bronson and then at the chagrin of Titus and most likely Sally, to the Village of Kalamazoo and in 1884 to the City of Kalamazoo.

In relationship to Corporation Hall, the most notable change was the renumbering of the plat lots and their reorientation from north and south to east and west. As mentioned earlier, lots 98 and 99 were then designated as lots 222 and 223. The two newly numbered lots in late 1844 became the future building site of the 1867 and 2013 Corporation Halls.

Continued Land Ownership Path

Date	West 80 Acres	East 80 Acres
11-12-1856	NA	Wyllis C. Ransom received a tax deed from the Auditor General of State of Michigan within lots 221-224.
2-5-1863	NA	The President & Trustees of the Village of Kalamazoo received a patent from the State of Michigan within lots 221-225.
Land Ownership Path will continue		

Until now the actual recordings in the Kalamazoo County Clerk-Register of Deed’s office have not been displayed. If one ventures to them one may quickly ponder the time it would take to read and transcribe just one. However, the transaction on February 5, 1863 was vital to the 1867 Corporation Hall story, as that is when the Village of Kalamazoo obtained title to the property on which Corporation Hall would, four years later, be constructed. This occurred as a result of the death of Justus Burdick, and the State of Michigan acquiring the tax deeds for the property in 1851.

What you will read from the record on the next page, transcribed from the hand written of County Register of Deeds, G.L. Mills on February 5, 1863, is doubly interesting for as you will see Fredrick Curtenius not only paid for the State of Michigan patent, but he had the State assign the property to the Village. It seems to the writer that Fredrick Curtenius is, therefore, the individual to bestow upon the charitable honor of this gift to his community even though the parcels did not pass through his ownership. It would seem to make sense that soon after, Col. Curtenius, the 25th anniversary of the Village speaker at the Ladies Library festive in 1854, became Village President in 1866.

Recorded State of Michigan Patent 2-5-63 to President & Trustees Village of Kalamazoo
Lots 20-21-~~22-23~~-24-25, as transcribed by writer from copies of the original
Clerk-Register of Deeds Liber

State of Michigan) Patent	Received for record February 10 th , 1863 9 o'clock A.M
To) No. 7849	G.L. Mills Register
Kalamazoo Village)	In The Name of the People of the State of Michigan to all whom those present shall come Greeting.

Whereas Fredrick W. Curtenius of the County of Kalamazoo Michigan on the fifteenth day of December the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty eight purchased from the State of Michigan the lands hereinafter described pursuant to the Laws of said State in force and in such case made and promised ~ And whereas the said Fredrick M Curtenius has paid for said land pursuant to the conditions of said sale – and the Laws of the State duly enacted in relationship thereto, the sum of Seven Hundred and fifty Dollars and 0 cents and all legal interest thereon accrued as full appears by the Certificate of the proper Officers now on file in the Office of Secretary of State of the State of Michigan being Certificate No 7066 for Primary School Land ~ And Whereas said Certificate and the Land described therein have been duly assigned to the President and Trustees of the Village of Kalamazoo ~ Now Therefore I Austin Blair Governor of said State in consideration of the premises and by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Laws of the said State in such cases made and provided: Do Issue this Patent, In the name and by the Authority of the People of the State of Michigan hereby granting and confirming unto the said President and Trustees of the Village of Kalamazoo and to their successors and assigns forever.

The following piece and parcel of land situated in the State aforesaid Town: A certain lot in the Village of Kalamazoo in the County of Kalamazoo and State of Michigan beginning at a point on the West side of Burdick Street two hundred and fifty two (252) feet from Main Street. and running thence west parallel with Main Street nine and one half (9 1/2) rods to an alley. thence south four (4) rods. thence East nine and one half rods (9 1/2) to Burdick Street. thence North along said Burdick Street four (4) rods to the place of beginning. To Have and To Hold the above described and granted premises with the said President and Trustees of the Village of Kalamazoo and to their successors and assigns to them and their sole and only proper use benefit and behalf; forever, as provided by the Laws of said State – against the lawful claim or claims of all persons whatsoever.

On Testimony Whereof I have caused these Letters to be made Patent
and the Great Seal of the State of Michigan to be here unto affixed.
Given under my hand. at Lansing. This fifth day of February in the year
of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three and of the
Independence of the United States of America the eighty seventh,

By the Governor. Austin Blair
George H. House Dep Secretary of State
Recorded, Book N Page 256

Frederick W. Curtenius became Village President in 1866, and one might surmise there surely had to be discussion about the state of the fire department's housing. Even if that did not occur Mr. Curtenius, two-time Village President, deserves to be noted entering the 1866 "eve" of the written Village discussion the ensuing year.

Frederick W. Curtenius Village President
1866 & 1877-1878³¹



"In the spring of 1867 the building in use by the fire department being in bad condition, it was resolved to erect a corporation building, and proposals for its construction were advertised for. Bids from three parties were opened March 4, 1867, as follows: Alexander Cameron, \$14,500; L.H. Trask, \$16,750; John C. Hays and David S. Hopkins, & \$17,087.50. That of Mr. Cameron was accepted, and the committee directed to close a contract with him. It appears from the record, however, that the contract was finally given to Messrs. Bush & Patterson for \$15,500, which included pay for removing No. 2 engine-house and hook-and-ladder house from the premises. The

³¹ <http://www.kpl.gov/local-history/government/village-presidents.aspx> List compiled by Kris Rzepczynski, former KPL staff member, 1998. Last updated 18 November 2005.

buildings removed were to be used for the same purposes as previously until the new structure was ready. Allen Potter, Esq., was appointed to superintend the construction of the building, and performed that duty to the general satisfaction of the board and citizens. The hall was completed in 1867. It is two stories in height, built of brick, with cut-stone trimmings. The fire department occupies the lower story, and on the upper floor are the rooms occupied by the president and trustees, marshal, public library and free reading room. The two south rooms on this floor were first occupied by the Ladies Library Association, which now has a fine building of its own on Park Street.”³²

Hezekiah G. Wells Village President
1867 & 1857-58 / 1864-65³³
Photo by Van Sickle, Kalamazoo



Writer's Note: A full page is devoted to this rather credentialed individual in the *History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880* between pages 216 and 217.

³² History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 268/ (JG)

³³ <http://www.kpl.gov/local-history/government/village-presidents.aspx> List compiled by Kris Rzepczynski, former KPL staff member, 1998. Last updated 18 November 2005.

The Next and Current Public Entity

First was the Plat of the Town of Brunson in 1831, the next was the Plat of the Village of Bronson in 1832 and then the Village of Kalamazoo 1844. These were each historical events, where little physical evidence exists.

To complete the transition we move forward to 1884. The following two images of beautiful cut-stone depict the celebration of the City's present status underscoring that it has been providing public services in most of the 36 square miles of **Section 15** for close to 175 years, as one of the largest of the 500 + home rule cities in the State of Michigan:

Captured by Writer's Nikon D-7000 – Nikkor AF-S 24.0-120.0mm 1:4 G ED Lens
What might you detect about diversity and inclusion?



The 1867 Corporation Hall's Transition from Public Ownership to Commercial/Retail Purposes

"Kalamazoo's first Village hall was constructed in 1867 by the local firm of Bush and Paterson. Corporation Hall, or "Quick to the rescue Hall" as it was nicknamed, cost \$15,500 to build, and its design reflected its status as a prominent public place. Rich in detail with just a few felicitous elements, the large central roof pediment is uncommon for this style, but the PEDIMENTED, four-over-four window sashes clearly declare the building's Italianate heritage.

Its fire hose drying tower was constructed at the rear of the lot first, in 1860, because at that time, Fireman's Hall was located just to the north. When Corporation Hall was constructed seven years later, Government offices and fire protection were combined under a single roof. The Fire Department occupied the main floor, and Village offices were above. The City renovated the main floor for additional offices after the Fire Department moved to new quarters in 1908.

The Hall had its interior remodeled several times during its civic life, including major work as documented in the 1879 Village *Annual Report*: "Corporation Hall has been thoroughly overhauled and improved, and put to valuable good uses." Several of these included space for the first Public Library, the Ladies Library Association and the Board of Education.

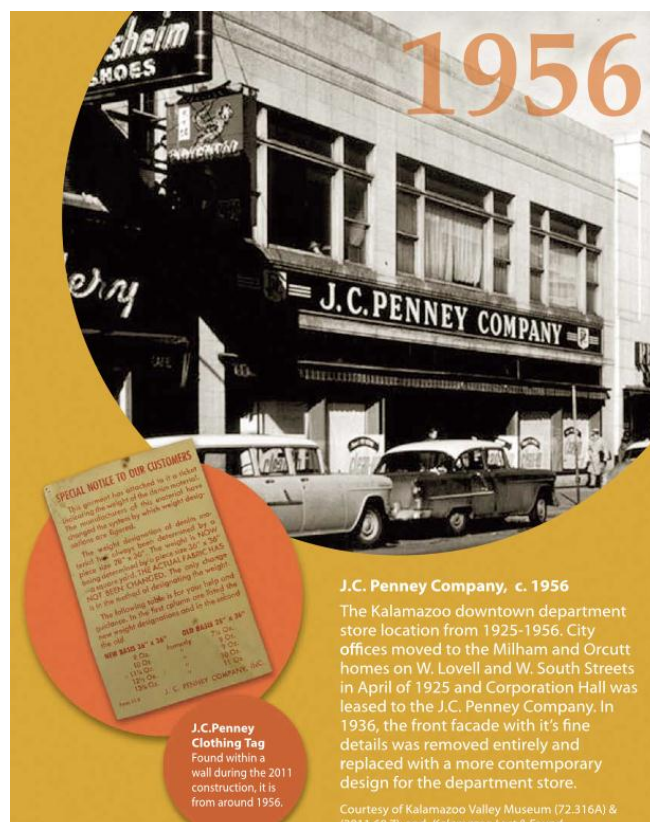
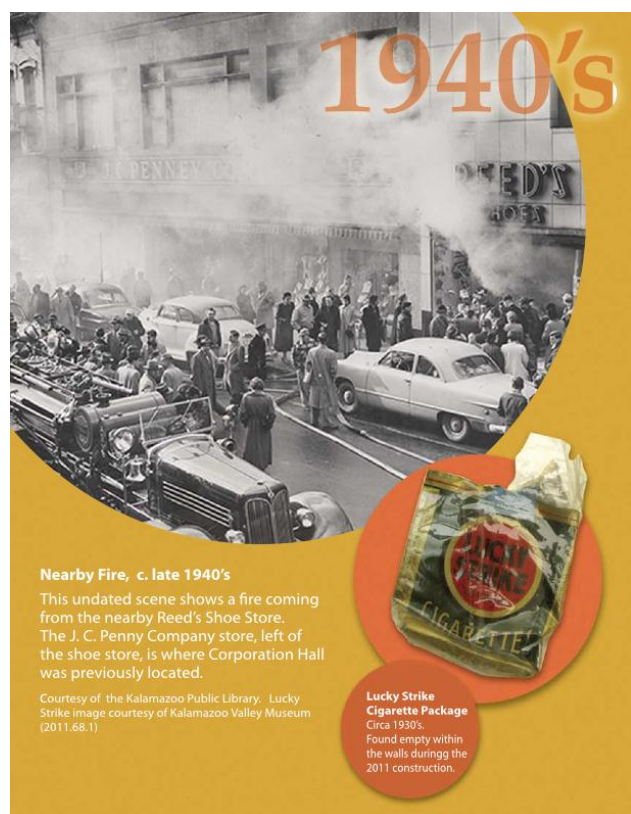
City offices moved to the Milham and Orcutt homes on West Lovell and West South Streets during April 1925, and Corporation Hall was leased to the J.C. Penney Company. In 1936, the front façade, with all of its fine detail, was removed entirely and replaced with a contemporary design, and the rear of the building expanded – at a cost of \$60,000. An even later remodeling gave the façade its present appearance."³⁴

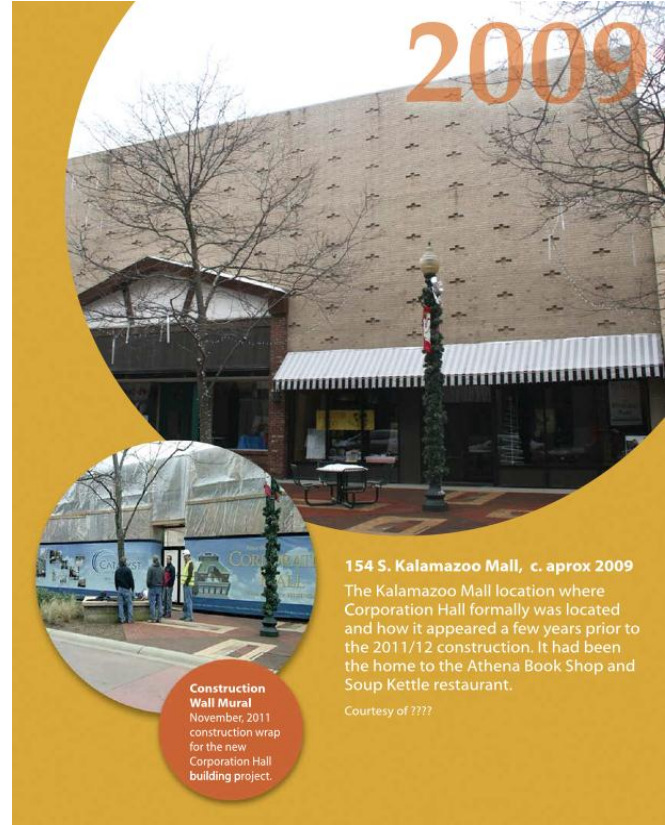
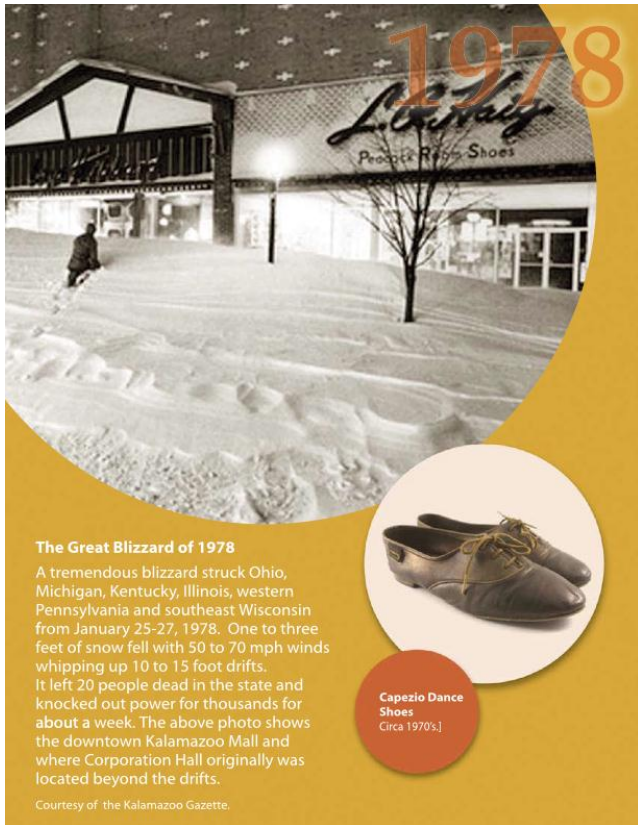
³⁴ Corporation Hall Excerpt, *Kalamazoo Lost and Found*, Lynn Smith Houghton - Pamela Hall O'Connor; Published by the Kalamazoo Historic Preservation Commission, City of Kalamazoo, 241 West South Street, Kalamazoo Michigan, 2001

Transitioning 1940's - 2011

The preceding Corporation Hall excerpt from, *Kalamazoo Lost and Found* notes the Corporation Hall transition in 1925 to J.C. Penney and the 1936 removal of the Hall's façade and fine detail. While the fine detail noted can be seen in the 10 images of Appendix X P-P10. The artful compositions below and on the following page show the J.C. Penney and subsequent evolution of Corporation Hall from public to private property, along with the added façade changes since the late 1930s, as the retail environment changed. It takes us up to the time when Catalyst Development LLC, assumed ownership of the property.

The compositions were Graciously made possible by
Kalamazoo's KAT Design





In 2011 the two lots, so long ago legally defined, were acquired by Catalyst Development LLC for further commercial/retail development, as well as housing for an increasing “downtown” living demand. Along the way, Catalyst was determined to use care in the preservation, as noted on pages 4-6 through its work with several community historical interests and its gracious gifting of artifacts to the Kalamazoo Valley Museum.

Because of that care, this writer’s project was made possible with the use of several board feet of the heavy structural joists and rafters from the 1867 Corporation Hall. However, more important is the re-use opportunities by Catalyst of between 12,000 and 15,000 board feet of the joists and rafters, for several purposes in its new structure and through its donations for another project in Kalamazoo. The writer gives due respect to Catalyst for its preservation of the usable wood. That many board feet is as significant as the wood is beautiful!

Over half of this writing lies in the ten appendices and its closing. That may be unusual, but this has been an unusual project. So it is hoped that you have enjoyed this first 58 pages and that you will enjoy the next 92.

Appendix I

Project Contributors/Collaborators

The following organizations/individuals has supported the project to memorialize the 1867 Corporation Hall and the history leading up to and after its construction.

AGIO IMAGING, Inc Ken DeVisser, Vice President
Attorneys Title Agency George M. Amar
Catalyst Development Co, L.L.C. Patti Owens, Vice President, Managing Director, Mike Bryant, CMS Group, Kathy A. Tyler, KAT Design
Central Michigan University, Clarke Historical Library Bryan Whitledge Assistant Librarian
City of Kalamazoo Bobby Hopewell, Mayor – Honorary Ken Collard, City Manager – Honorary, Karen Suglia, The City Manager’s Perfect Manager, Andrew Falkenberg, GIS Mapping Specialist, Todd Pryor, Forestry Supervisor, Tony Wright, Archivist, City of Kalamazoo
County of Kalamazoo Thom Canny, Corporation Counsel, Bonnie Payton, Equalization Director, Mathew L. Hanson, Deputy Equalization Director, Timothy A. Snow, Clerk/Register of Deeds, Anita Bailey, Document Specialist
Downtown Kalamazoo Incorporated Steve Deisler, Vice President, Downtown Planning and Development, Brian Persky, Planning & Development Coordinator
First Image Screen Print & Embroidery Bill Shearer, Owner Michael Frazier
Gilmore Real Estate Dan Blacken, Maintenance, Art Mueller, Security Officer
Golden Needle Mounir Fahs Fadi (Frank) Fahs

Great Friends Sue Bos, Document Review Nancy Donovan, Document Review Annmarie E. Freeland, Ladies Library Association, Lillabelle Freeland, Project Oversight, Linda Gregart, Document Review, James Gregart, Historian, Researcher, Sleuth, Document Review, Marcia Steele, Water Colorist, Erik Krogh, Woodsmith /Roustabout, Adam Tabor, Assistant Photographer / Woodcrafter, Dr. John Mitchell, CMU Relationship, Duane Triemstra – Document Search
The Hinman Company Rich MacDonald, Chief Operating Officer, Dave Fortune, CPM, Director - Property Mgt.
Kalamazoo Public Library Beth Timmerman, Local History Specialist, Carolyn Gaff, Library Assistant Local History, Patrick Jouppi, Local History Specialist, Jerry Smith, Local History Specialist
Kalamazoo Valley Museum Tom Dietz, Curator of Research, Paula Meltzer, Assistant Director for Collections
Michigan 60th District Representative Sean McCann - Honorary
Midwest Custom Embroidery Casey Valladolid, Jennie Brown
Otten Trophies and Awards Joe Otten, Owner
Preservation Practices Pamela, O’Connor, Owner
Steel Chem and Engineering , Union City, Carl Randall, Owner
Western Michigan University, Archives and Regional History Khanh Hoang, Office Associate, Kaylin Nicholas, Student Intern

Appendix II

Louis H. Everts: American Atlas Publisher and Entrepreneur (excerpts)

While our local history of the 1800's is rich, considerable references herein are taken from the History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 through the graciousness of James Gregart from his historical collection.

Samuel W. Durant, one of Everts' associates, introduces the efforts to develop the publication's 500 + pages and beautiful drawings of Kalamazoo County scenes, such as this document's page 9 image. The effort was the culmination of the men and women who sought out the many sources used to pull the accounts together from both near and far, collaborated together and in essence agreed on the accounts contained within the publication. The collaboration in the late 1870s provide a simply amazing set of histories for each of the 16 congressional or survey "towns" now in Kalamazoo County. The background of the publisher, Everts and Abbot, is especially interesting and follows.

Louis Humphrey Everts (1836-1924) once described himself as "a very busy and successful man". Working within the restrictions of many different partnerships, he created markets for his products where often no market existed. His diverse work, although sometimes criticized by his contemporaries, has proven to contain lasting value for the historian today—for the individual maps, atlases and histories produced under his direction provide insight into a way of life long past. From his beginnings with the firm of Thompson and Everts (1865-1872) to the close of his career as proprietor of The Century Map Company (1902-1913), Everts rode the wave of county map and atlas publishing and, indeed, influenced its course over the years.

All of the combination atlas maps issued by Everts and his associates are modeled on the same pattern. They generally include maps of the United States, the pertinent state, and the featured county, a history of the county several pages in length, plates of individual townships, and lithographic illustrations. Illustrations of farmsteads and town residences are particularly numerous, and virtually all aspects of rural and urban life are portrayed with pictures of factories, commercial establishments, interior and exterior views of retail stores, churches, and public buildings. The views show various types of carriages and wagons, as well as horses, cattle, sheep, and hogs in neatly fenced fields. Biographical sketches are also a feature of some atlases. Proprietors and individuals paid prescribed fees for having their homes or businesses pictures in each.

Louis H. Everts made a significant decision in 1876 when he changed his focus from publishing maps and atlases to county histories. The firm of Everts, Ensign & Everts published histories of Ontario County and Seneca County, New York, and L. H. Everts published a history of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, during the Centennial year. Many of Everts early atlases included historical summaries and several had the phrase "historical atlas" in their titles. Evert's switch from atlas production to county history publication in 1876 was part of a nation-wide trend, which has been described by

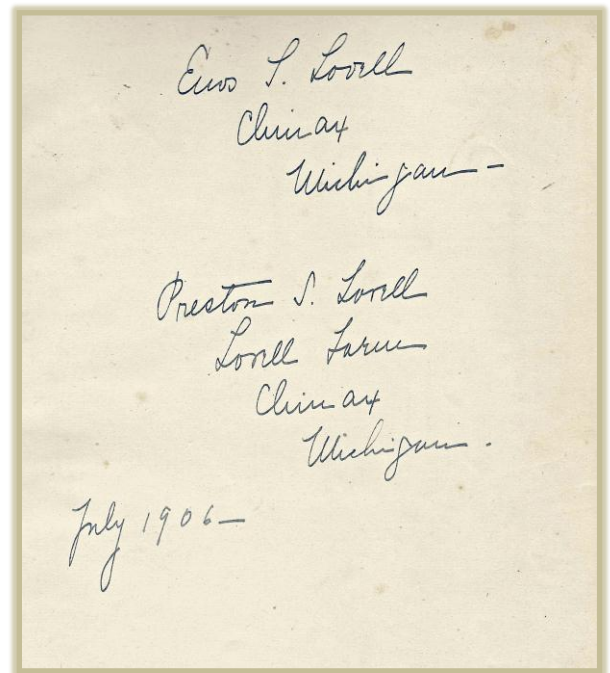
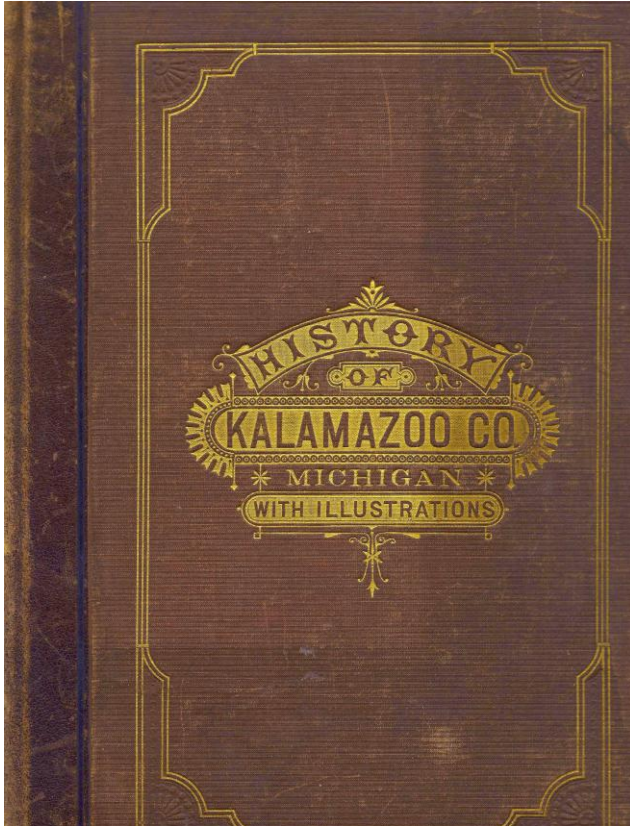
Michael Conzen.

Everts' business soon outstripped his ability to personally oversee everything: "It became so large and with so many accounts that it was impossible to conduct it so I thought of a plan of selecting some agent in whom I had confidence and giving him a certain interest in one or two publications, and that is the way I happened to have so many firms. . . . I furnished all the capital. I never was with but one man who furnished a dollar. These men would employ the canvassers and sell the books and I would send them five hundred dollars for instance and they would charge that to themselves and then credit it as they paid it out. I had at least half a dozen firms doing business that way in Michigan, Massachusetts and elsewhere."

His various endeavors resulted in the employment of many surveyors, draftsmen, historians and authors. Most of these professionals worked both for Everts and his rivals creating an interrelationship between the various publishing firms that proves difficult to decipher. This work involved Michigan counties of Calhoun, Genesee and St. Joesph, as well as others. The following firms are known to be part of Everts' publishing efforts:

Firm	Dates	Location	Publishing Specialty
Thompson & Everts	1866-1872	Geneva, Illinois	Maps and Atlases
Everts, Baskin & Stewart	1872-1873	Chicago	Atlases
Everts, Stewart & Company	1874	Chicago	Atlases
Everts & Stewart	1874-1876	Chicago and Philadelphia	Atlases
Everts, L. H. (& Company)	1874-1887	Chicago and Philadelphia	Atlases & Histories
Everts, Ensign & Everts	1876-1877	Philadelphia	Atlases & Histories
Everts & Ensign	1878-1879	Philadelphia	Histories
Everts & Fariss	1878	Philadelphia	Histories
Everts & Abbott	1879-1880	Philadelphia	Histories
Peck, R. T., & Company	1885-1887	Philadelphia	Histories

Historian Jim Gregart's Leather Bound 1880 Everts & Abbot History



A variety of the writing's footnote references are graciously provided from Jim's Original *History of Kalamazoo Michigan* by Everts and Abbot

A Short Summary About The Handwritten Note

Jim acquired the reference book in 1975. When opening it he found the above note. The following summary will show this note, signed in 1906 by **Enos L. and Preston S. Lovell**, was connected to the Lovell family, which first came to the area in the early 1830s. While both signatures appear as though the same individual may have signed them; Jim's research provides a logical but possible explanation.

"Enos was the son of **Willard** and **Zeriah** and that **Enos** and **Phebe Lovell** were the parents of **Preston Lovell**. While the records available cannot determine the date of Mrs. Lovell's death, the 1850 U.S. Census lists Enos Lovell at 27 years of age, as a farmer, living with his elderly mother Zeriah and his brothers in Climax. That would place his birth in the early 1820s. Michigan Death Records from 1897-1920 fix the date of son Preston's death at September 16, 1915.

Therein, it seems likely that **Preston** would have inherited the *History of Kalamazoo Michigan* from his father, **Enos**. It also seems likely that **Enos** may not have been living in July 1906 (84 years after his birth) and, therefore, son Preston affixed his name after that of his father to commemorate his father's role in purchasing the Everts and Abbot publication, which likely occurred in the early 1880s while Mr. Durant, the Everts and Abbot lead for the publication, was busy taking orders."

Jim's More Intricate Findings

To that end, the following research was completed using articles in the Kalamazoo Gazette of October 18, 1925 and August 13, 1850, copies of both graciously provided by the Kalamazoo Public Library and then provided to Jim by the writer, as well as birth and death records from Michigan death records, U.S. Census data for 1850, 1860 and 1880 and, Michigan Birth and Christenings from 1867-1911 Jim acquired by internet all with which to summarize the following.

"First, let's go back to Revolutionary War times: **Cyrus Lovell**, born in Windham County, Vermont in 1804, settled in Kalamazoo Village in 1832. While Cyrus stayed for only a few years before moving to the Ionia area, he was Kalamazoo's first attorney and first District Attorney (this was prior to Michigan becoming a State) or Prosecuting Attorney, as we now know the name (Jim had known this name from the many records he amassed as an assistant and then as Kalamazoo County Prosecuting Attorney for many years). Cyrus constructed the community's first frame dwelling at South and Church streets (another reference places this home at the corner of Rose and Water Streets). Cyrus also represented Titus Bronson at one point."

"Cyrus Lovell, the attorney who stopped Bronson from whittling the window-sash (during what must have been an elongated court session about his saw mill), paid him this tribute. He kept everybody that came to his house, especially the ministers; was a friend to the religion of the Bible and to the human race; was just and liberal and ready always to do his share in every good work. He was public spirited and patriotic. He furnished me his horse, saddle, and bridle, and powder-horn, ball-pouch, balls and a rifle, and directed me to go and see what the matter was with Black Hawk in 1832. In short, Titus Bronson was an honest, good and useful man. He injured no man, but was often wronged."³⁵

Back to Jim's Evert & Abbot and the Lovell Family connection. "An old ledger of a general store in Climax, operated by **Willard Lovell**, was uncovered in the attic of the Battle Creek home of the late W.J. Smith and turned over to the Kalamazoo Historical Society by Mrs. Andrew Ness. The book was more than 137 years old (in 1950) having been started by Lovell in Grafton, Vermont in 1813 before moving to Comstock Township. Mr. Lovell also bought a farm of Titus Bronson.

³⁵ Kalamazoo and How it Grew, Dr. Willis Dunbar; Western Michigan University 1959 p 36

He and sons Lafayette and **Enos** were township supervisors from Climax for 35 years. **Willard** was the first supervisor after it was separated from Comstock. Names appearing in the ledger show Uriah Upjohn and Isaac Davis, leader of the Underground Railroad movement, as customers. **Willard** was said to be of “vigorous intellect” and had the makings of a lawyer in him but was content to remain a merchant-farmer and a “pettifogger”, a small time lawyer. His wife **Zeriah**, a brilliant woman, was the aunt of Alfonso Taft - the father of William Howard Taft, the 27th president of the United States.

Enos Lovell – was found in the 1850 US Census at 27 years of age, or born in the early 20’s, and listed as a farmer living with his elderly mother, **Zeriah** and his brothers in Climax, Michigan. His mother was alive at age 70 and born in 1780 (half way through the Revolutionary War) in New York State. Most likely his father, **Willard** also went back to that time frame.”

Jim’s research from his publication’s, *History of Kalamazoo Michigan*, pages 138-139 finds on May 30, 1871 the creation of the “Pioneer Society of Kalamazoo County” and where at a meeting in Corporation Hall the listing of members includes an “**Enos T. Lovell**”.

Jim found at least one son by **Enos T.** and **Phebe S. Lovell** that being **Preston S. Lovell**, born in February 1857 according to the 1900 U.S. Census thereby closing the loop on the hand written note and Jim’s leather bound artifact.

Appendix III

Wood Shop Notes Etching and Framing 1867 Corporation Hall

First – Getting Started

After woodsmith/roustabout and great friend Erik Krogh helped load the “logs” in the fall of 2011, because of their length and the Silverado’s short box length, we knew they would teeter on the end of the tailgate. That necessitated loading a seven or so footer to add weight to the front of the box, least they all fall out on the short trip to the Oshtemo Township shop. The work crew readily obliged by halving another one of the joists. The other obstacle, given both their length and weight, was getting them into the woodshop. That was solved with the Stihl MS 260, by quickly halving them. Once the chips were on the ground, into the shop they went.



Each of the electronic images in this Appendix is from the Writer's Nikon D-7000 – Nikkor AF-S 24.0-120.0mm 1:4 G ED Lens

As noted earlier, it took a few months to contemplate and then move forward with the Corporation Hall etching. Conceptually a “frame” was required, which eventually took its form from the floor joists from the 1867 Hall, as did practically everything else, but for one exception. The completed frame was envisioned to not only contain the etching-plate on its back-plate, but memorable photographs of Corporation Hall and its activities.

The etching itself was to be simulated from two photos of the Hall, as described earlier. Considerable time was spent with the Kalamazoo Public Library, the Kalamazoo Valley Museum and the Western Michigan University Archives Regional History Collection all of which graciously provided image opportunities with the Nikon but more so wonderful electronic images of their files.

Second – The Back-Plate

Following considerable thought, “construction” began sometime in March. First was milling the big “timbers” to size for the back plate. The plate’s size had, over the prior two or so months, increased by 30% or so in order to accommodate added photos etc. and, unframed, was now 48” in width and 37” in height or reasonably close to a photographic 4:6 composition.

Two of the longer “logs” were cut to the 48” length and with the table saw their 2.5” edges were removed to provide veneer for the bottom and two sides of the frame. This was necessary for two reasons. First, the bottom frame was to resemble the cut-stone eyebrows over the top of the Hall’s bays and windows necessitating gentle concave and convex band saw cuts, so the bottom frame would protrude out from the edge of the two side frames. Thus its 2.5” edge would be raw or cut wood, thus the need for veneer.

Next, the edges needed to be smooth since the natural edges, like the surface widths, had “weatherized” over the many years and bringing the four boards together with little or no apparent seam would not have been possible.

The veneer was laid aside and two 48” x 11” “logs” were resawn into four 1.1” or so boards. Two of the four were then milled to about 10” in width and the other two were milled to approximately 8.5”.



In turn, these were drum sanded to just over 1" with 80 grit paper to provide a light horizontal line effect for the surface's contrast.



The biscuit joiner quickly cut three sets of edge slots; surfaced on the slot edges with Titebond III and then pulled together with clamps to fully compress them into the back-plate. The two 10" boards formed the top and bottom and the two 8.5" boards formed the middle of the back plate such that the slight difference in grains between the two logs from which they were cut was not so apparent.

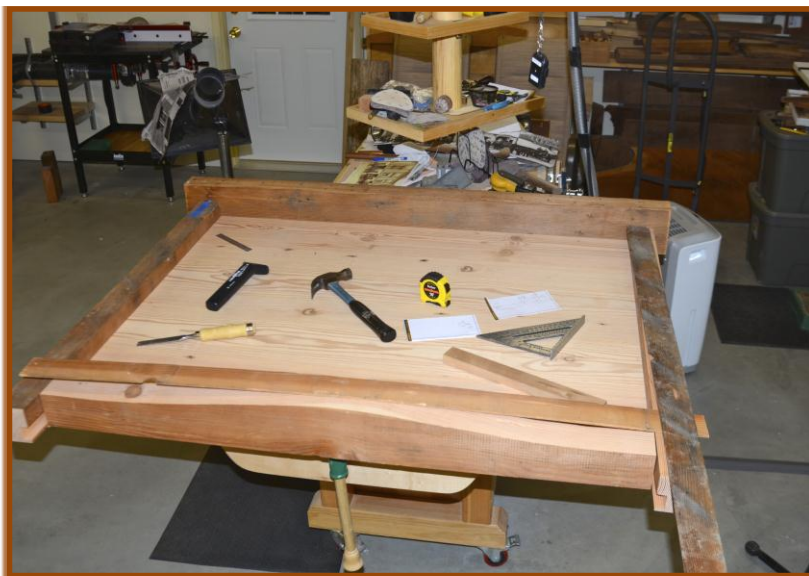


Since the back-plate was quite large, it was then braced on its backside with two 1" x 2.5" x 32" fir struts from the logs and then glued and secured by lag bolts. These struts also form the hanging assembly for the overall frame. The raw wood, now with the polyurethane, carries a rich honey tone with which to contrast the raw wood that will become the etching surface with a quite dark amber tone.

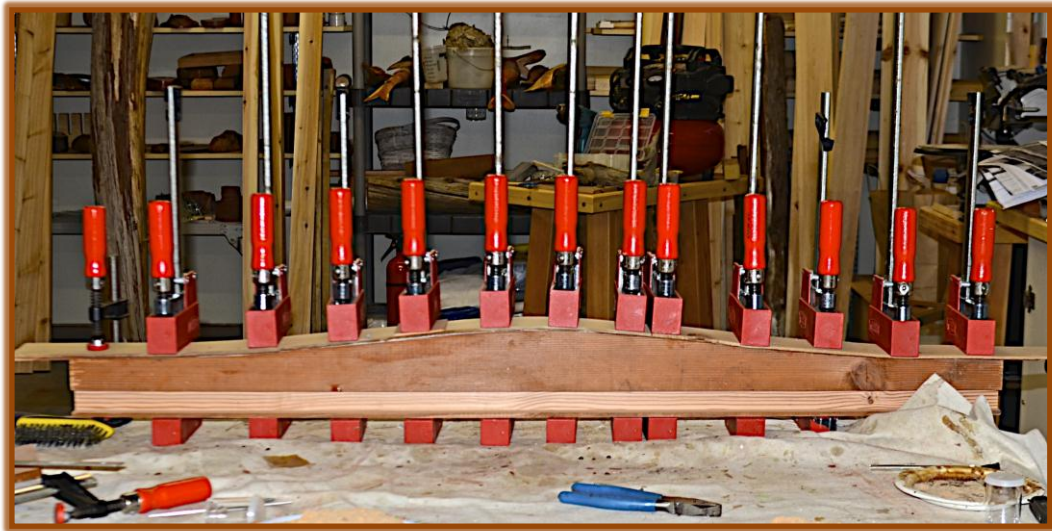
The framing was milled from the 2.5" thickness of the logs. The top frame was designed 5" wide, the bottom frame would be 4.5" and the two side frames 3" wide. After milling to length each received an approximate 1" dado, a tad in from the back edge, to fully surround the plate boards .75" deep, as seen in the image below.



Minor adjustments to each had them fitting snugly on the back-plate such that the top protruded out 3.5", the bottom out 3" to its outside eyebrow round and the two vertical sides out 1.375", as envisioned.



In the prior image, notice the veneer laying on top. It was then applied to the front of two of the exposed frame pieces, as shown for the protruding bottom frame in the following image.



Next, bores were made in each of the four sides about 8" apart into the back-plate for $\frac{1}{4}$ x 4" deck lag screws. This would secure the framing snugly to the back-plate and in turn would be sealed with wood caps.

Then a pediment, resembling the cut-stone beneath the Hall's tower and at the Hall's front structure, was crafted for attachment to the top frame.



The pediment also served another purpose for the project contributors, which may be discussed many years from now. The pediment atop the top frame is shown below.



Third – The Etching-Plate

While the back plate boards ran horizontal, the etching plate boards would run vertical. Some cuts for the frame sides were left and were then resawn to a 5/8" thickness, as it needed to have less "heft" visually than the back plate. While that made sense it, the thinner material somewhat defied the biscuit joiner / clamping routine, as well as the idea of attaching it with a few dowel pegs so it would stand "off" the surface for a slight relief appearance.

Additionally, the thinner dimension would not leave sufficient surface on the plate, for dowel holes to stand the etching-plate off of the back-plate and the risk that the bits, drilling into the back of the etching-plate might without care come through the surface in the attempt to get every little bit of dowel peg length possible.

So the four boards with differing widths, dependent upon the cuts that were left from the frame wood, were placed on .5" birch plywood and on each side 2" less in width and heights so the Birch would not show and the etching-plate would have sufficient relief for appearance. They were then glued tightly on a flat surface with lots of weight and gently compressed with clamps before doing so. They were finished heavily with polyurethane on the backside. When completed, the Birch and etching-plate provided the added thickness for the dowels and the plate's appropriate relief from the back-plate.

As noted and seen in the image above, each of the boards were also of differing length, which was fine, as the object was to partially shape the right side of the Hall's etching configuration to the plate itself, where a number of dimensional changes occurred (the left was pretty much straight up the Hall's south side and was already raw wood).

The project then proceeded to miter both the etching-plate raw wood edges on the right and topsides, as these etching-plate sides were milled open wood. Once mitering the 5/8 x 5/8 raw wood edges the right side would then accept the raw wood surface on the right to make the raw wood match the left sides.

The etching-plate was developed so one board protruded at the top such that its left edge was raw wood and that too was matched with the raw wood edging. The plate completion proved to take quite a bit of time, but it began looking quite acceptable once fitted with the glued 5/8" edges.



Next was penciling Corporation Hall onto the etching-plate being sure, except for the tower, to leave an approximate 2" margin to the plates dimensions. With the detail envisioned this took considerable time to design and pencil, perhaps 15-20 or so hours, but it finally approached a point of satisfaction over several days.

While the image below does not bring out the lighter # 2 penciling of the Tower, it is intended for the reader to contrast the Tower area of the plate to the images immediately following showing the etching/wood burning process.



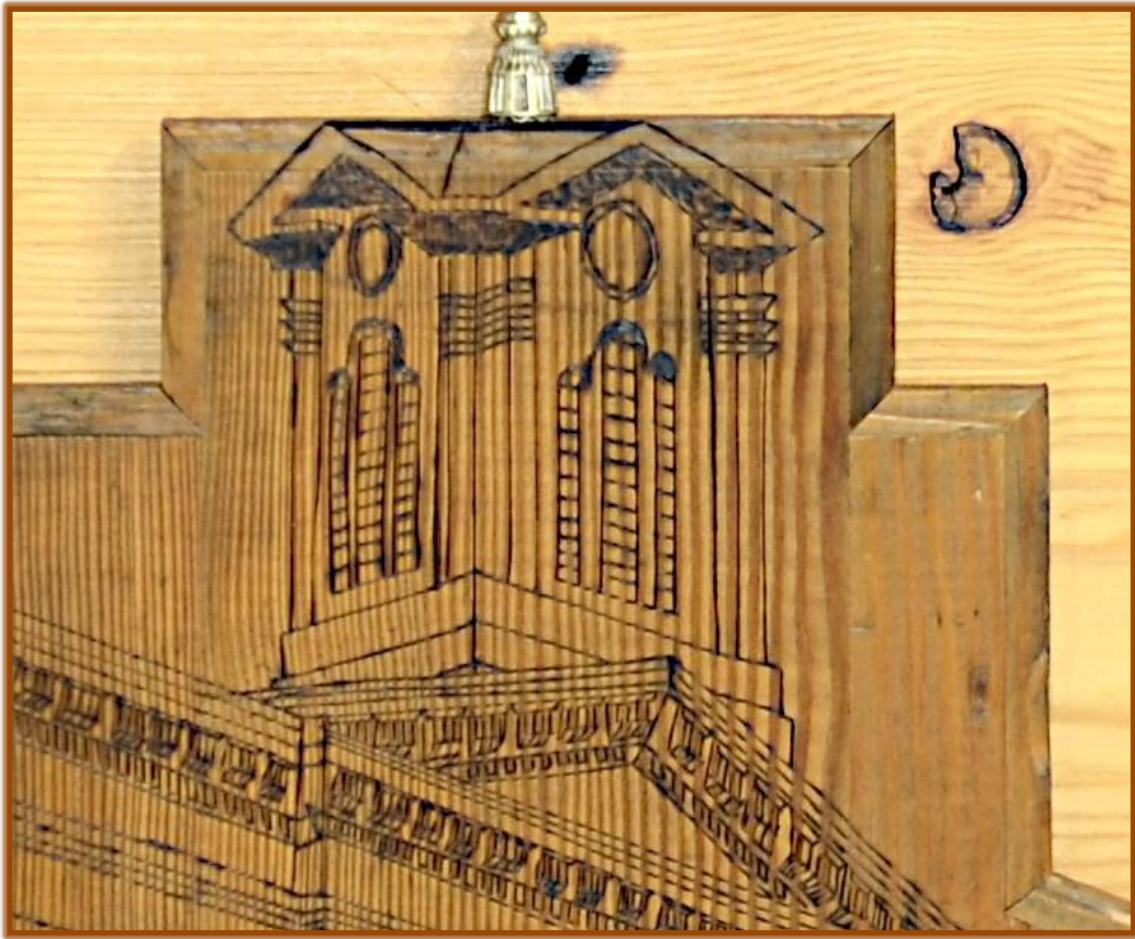
Following the penciling was 25 of so laborious, but “aromatic” hours of etching 1867 Corporation Hall, lastingly, into the raw wood etching plate, creating angular depth wherever possible. It certainly brought the lines and their shapes out, as shown in the following three images.



Approximately 1/3 Etch-burned



Approximately 85% Etch-burned



Etch-burning now complete with the Tower

Fourth – Slightly Accentuating the Etching-Plate's Cut-Stones And Drawing the Names on the Six Cut-stones

Great friend Marcia Steele, an individual who loves a brush in her hand, is wonderfully gifted. She is a watercolorist/muralist who creates a variety of projects for her and husband, great friend Chris, and other friends. On their Kalkaska County Camp's sauna she placed forest and wildlife scenes from around the property, and other "north woods" images on a 6' x 12' side of the structure – it's beautiful! Marcia also supported one of the Basswood etchings concepts noted early on in the writing with its poetically delicate coloring. One should now have the picture.

So north the etching went to their beautifully expanded camp lying on 30 acres sandwiched between Cannon Stream and the Little Devil Creek a quarter mile south of the Manistee River. When returning with the etching the cut-stone blocks, eyebrows and the other magnificent pediments were accentuated with a light transparent wash of stone.

The six cut-stones on the face of the 1867 Corporation Hall will now stand out!

ALWAYS READY

ERECTED AD 1867

PROMPT RESCUE

BURR-OAK

EMPIRE

EXCELSIOR



Fifth – the 1867 American Flag

The 37 star flag became official on July 4th 1867, as Nebraska was admitted to the Union on March 1st, 1867. Somewhere in the planning for Corporation Hall the Village decided that the American Flag should fly above the Hall's tower. Perhaps historians will dispute this, however, enlarging with the Nikon D-7000 - 105mm AF Micro Nikkor 2.8mm Lens electronic image of a beautiful Kalamazoo Public Library photograph (History Room Photograph File P-823 Grocery Store photograph circa **1867 – 1883**) clearly shows the upper half of Corporation Hall with a grocery store, stacks of wood and barrels in the foreground.

The Hall's flagpole clearly stands at the top center of the Tower with the faint outline of an eagle near the top. The grocery store image can be seen in Appendix X image B and the image's enlargement of the Tower and flagpole can again be seen on page 8.

Contrast this with the enlargement of the Kalamazoo Public Library's photograph by John Reidsema (History Room Photograph File P-1060, as seen in Appendix X image G) showing his **1908** image of the Kalamazoo National Bank Building (now Kalamazoo Building). The photo was being shot looking slightly southwest from approximately the present day location of the Kalamazoo Media Arts building on West Michigan. It included the barely visible streetscape of Burdick Street's west side establishments.

Barely visible, one can see the Tower of Corporation Hall jutting above the other structures, but not nearly enough to detect any detail, let alone a thin flagpole. However, by enlarging the electronic image, a different flagpole (or perhaps the same one that had been moved) is clearly visible, but now in the location of the angular cut-stone pediment at the top of the primary structure near the bottom of where the Tower begins to rise.

So, the eagle, pole and flag became a necessary part of the etching plate, but to stand atop the etching-plate itself protruding in its original position above the Corporation Hall Tower. Great friend and regional historian Jim Gregart was commandeered into the project. Jim provided the above lead-in paragraph's flag history and the 1867 American Flag configuration.

How to create it in a dimensionally approximate 2" by 3" format was another issue. Father and son tailors, Mounir Fahs and Fadi Fahs, have been serving our family for many years from their Golden Needle business location on the south side of East Michigan just past the Michigan / Portage Y platted in Sally and Titus Bronson's 80 acres. One can read about the courageous background of this wonderful Fahs family now serving Kalamazoo.³⁶

³⁶ Sunday, June 19, 2011 article: By William R. Wood | Kalamazoo Gazette
http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2011/06/business_is_tailor-made_for_fa.html

Stopping to see Fadi (Frank) and sharing the idea brought forth discussion, of course, about the size. I reminded Frank of the bi-centennial of the Ladies Library Association when he tailored an approximate 4" x 6" American Flag for contributor and past LLA President Annmarie Freeland. After considering the, tiny by comparison size, Frank suggested the stars be embroidered and to then return for a next step discussion.

His suggestion of dropping over to Midwest Custom Embroidery worked well. The company, sitting on the north side of East North Street, borders the north side of Titus Bronson's 80 acres. There, over the next few weeks, Casey Valladolid and Jennie Brown were of great help and on textured cloth the 37 stars were beautifully embroidered.

However, the 2" width was a bit too small for 13 strips in the fashion of any alteration. Frank thought for several weeks while stopping at several fabric shops for ideas. One day he called and suggested a prearranged visit to First Image Screen Print & Embroidery at Sprinkle Road and Center Street owned by Bill and Vicki Shearer. A few hours later Bill had everything under control with a sublimation process, using an electronic image, which fused the poly cloth molecules with the stars and stripes of the 1867 – 37 star flag into the cloth forever.

In the meantime, a net search found many eagle possibilities from antiques to carved boards to sculptures, from fan and chandler pulls to lamp finials, yard ornaments and literally all kinds and forms including the Philadelphia Eagles – all kinds except for a sufficient brass eagle that would be dimensionally appropriate for the top of the Corporation Hall flag pole.

After considerable website searching a site appeared on the 19th of 20 Goggle pages. Soon after, Katt Ambrose of Anoka, MD then shipped a beautiful brass eagle sitting in the middle of a small brass tray attached thereto with a ¼ 20 solid brass bolt 3/8" in length. Perfecto, as a 10" solid brass float ball rod had already been purchased from Gale's True Value Hardware on Stadium Drive which, thankfully, had a ¼" 20 thread.

The page 8 image of the "Farmer's Alley grocery store" photo clearly shows the Tower's roof structure with a metallic or cut-stone base for the flagpole. But, there seemed no way to replicate the pole without a metal sculptor (which was considered) right? Wrong! Quick trips to two lamp shops for finials did not help, but a quick one to Menards on West Main quickly found five lamp finials half-way down the display board, but to no avail.

Rising up to leave, and somewhat inadvertently glancing down three or four rows, a lone finial stood out. Quickly off the peg it came. But for some small portions, it was almost the spitting image of the Hall's structure and colored correctly to the brass. A few hacksaw adjustments, the drill press clamp, a ¼ bit and a minor amount of follow up filing did the trick.

Sixth – The Men, Teams and Fire Equipment



Before proceeding a short story is pertinent. Using various Nikons and Nikkor lens over a period of ten years, 190 Michigan waterfalls were captured on Kodachorm 64. Each is now part of the writer's collection *Autumn Falls and Spring Cascades*. Of the collection, Spray Falls, tumbling 80 feet or so over the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore's limestone cliffs into Lake Superior is the most profound!

"Towering above Lake Superior are the most prominent of the Lakeshore's geographic and scientific features, the multicolored sandstone cliffs for which the lakeshore is named. These cliffs reach to a height of 200 feet above the lake and extend more than 12 of the 42 miles of shoreline within Lakeshore boundaries. Equally important as these cliffs in geographic and scientific significance are the Grand Sable Dunes, sand dunes perched atop five square miles of high sand bluffs at the eastern portion of the Lakeshore. Miles of unspoiled beaches are a third prominent feature of the lakeshore.

The scientific features of the Lakeshore reach far beyond the visually spectacular. Because of its location within the transition zone between the boreal and eastern deciduous forest biomes, the Lakeshore has elements of both forest types. Hardwood forests are prevalent, but conifers dominate some sites. Soils range from well-drained sandy soils to hydric soils. Wetlands are common throughout the Lakeshore. Many wildlife species live permanently or seasonally within the Lakeshore. The cold maritime climate along the shore of Lake Superior greatly influences physical conditions and hence biotic communities." ³⁷

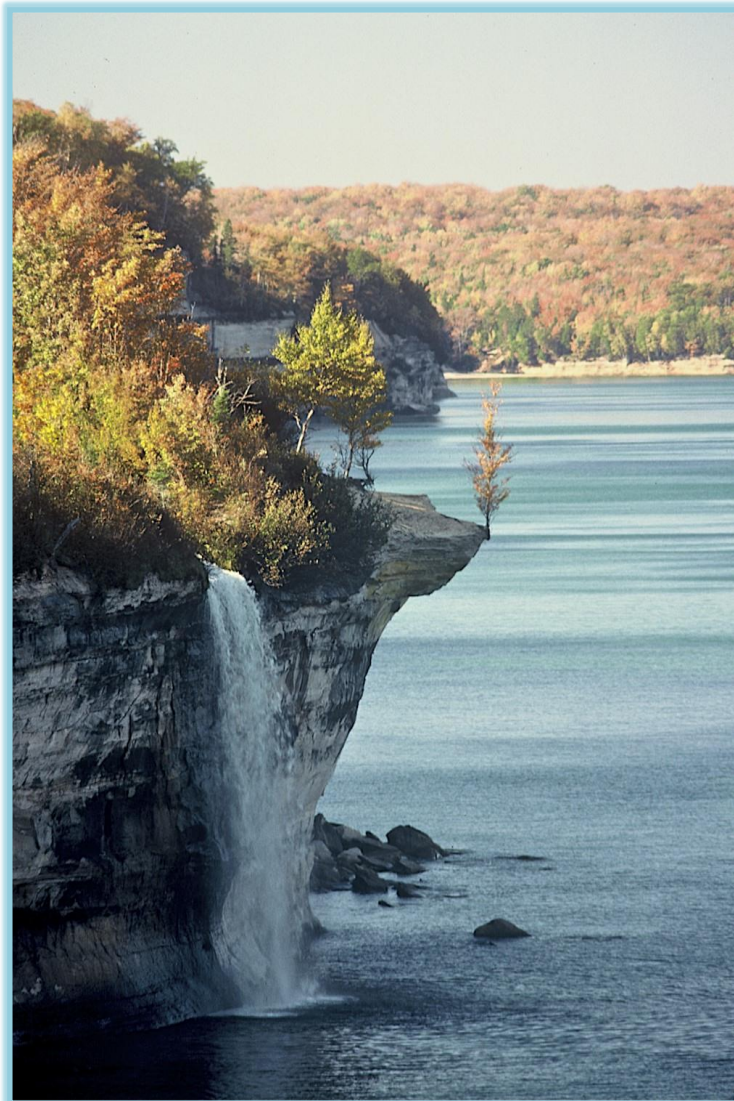
Spray Falls adorns the cliffs about two thirds of the way across the Lake Superior cliff and shoreline about five or so miles east of Munising.

³⁷ <http://www.nps.gov/piro/naturescience/index.htm>

The Pertinent Story

When the Kodachrome 64 positives, taken with a Nikon FE using a Nikkor 180mm Lens, were returned in October 1988 – what a spectacular Michigan autumn scene! It became a 16 x 20 cibachrome set in an appropriate frame and hung on two office walls since then. However, there was one unforeseen matter:

As visitors viewed Spray Falls in the earlier years, they certainly commented positively; however, invariably they would point to the small tree growing from a thin layer of the 600 million year old layered Cambrian limestone stone on the edge of a small angular precipice overhanging the cliff walls thirty or so feet west of the falls. Over time, as this view unfolded to visitors, the little tree became the dominate natural object of the photograph and Spray Falls became what Corporation Hall's back and etching-plates will likely become. Like so many other Michigan locations, the writer absolutely loves this place of beauty in our State.



On each five-year return to Spray, the small Gray Birch (identified by Michigan State University using the writer's close up images of leaves and bark) its growth stunted from the ferocity of the winter shields of ice and wind fraught by Lake Superior's greatest efforts to bring it to its demise, continued its scratching to retain its prominence in the midst of its eking out its existence.

Aptly for the writer, it's how ***I Fell in Love with a Gray Birch.***

**Life's Journey
By Victor Hugo**

*"Be as a bird perched on a frail
branch that she feels bending beneath
her, still she sings away all the same,
knowing she has wings"*

The Etching-plate's Tree That Will Be

As the photo exploration/search began to occur, one photograph stood out: *Fire Trucks and Fire Fighters, Corporation Hall, Burdick Street, Kalamazoo, 1908* KALAMAZOO VALLEY MUSEUM file 12811 (please reference this magnificent and deeply historical [for reasons you will see] photograph in Appendix X images P through P11).

The photographer's lens, 108 years ago, had to be inches up or down seven feet off the surface and several yards to the south of the south end of Corporation Hall just across Burdick Street. Most likely the photographer's posterior was full up (or back) against the buildings on Burdick Street's east side. The writer's assumption was drawn, as the lens lacked the field to capture the south upper portion of Corporation Hall or the Tower and he or she would have wanted as much of the Hall in view as possible.

He or she then flicked the shutter to give unto us this beautiful angular photograph of Corporation Hall with the Burr-Oak, Empire and Excelsior fire teams, horses and equipment, spread out before the Hall's Burdick Street bays trolley tracks in the foreground, posing so patiently for the photographer.

Two "engineering" issues came to head earlier on. First, etching the Hall was one thing, but how could the detail of the Kalamazoo Valley Museum's Photograph, 47.721.80 possibly be captured in the etching through wood burning? "Not by this guy" was quickly decided. How then to rectify the matter – Laser cut steel?

With the quick help of Carl Randall, owner of Steel Chem and Engineering in Union City, which creates absolutely wonderful Metal Art steel images let alone many other

beautiful products, the notion was set aside. Carl explained that the fire team part of the photo lacked sufficient division of the subject models to define them. Carl went on to advise that since the men are mixed on the centers of the horses and wagons it would require an eight-foot size to obtain sufficient detail to define the men from the wagons.

The perfect example might be an almost completely flat scene, such as a Conestoga wagon with the mules in the lead, the family members on the wagon and the dogs bringing up the back with the sun at the back and where the back-lit sun rays transfers their nearly non-dimensional image onto a crisp flat surface. One of Carl's Metal Art steels fitting that description, purchased from Tiller's International, adorns the room where this narrative is being developed overlooking the sugar maples in Oshtemo Township's section 12.

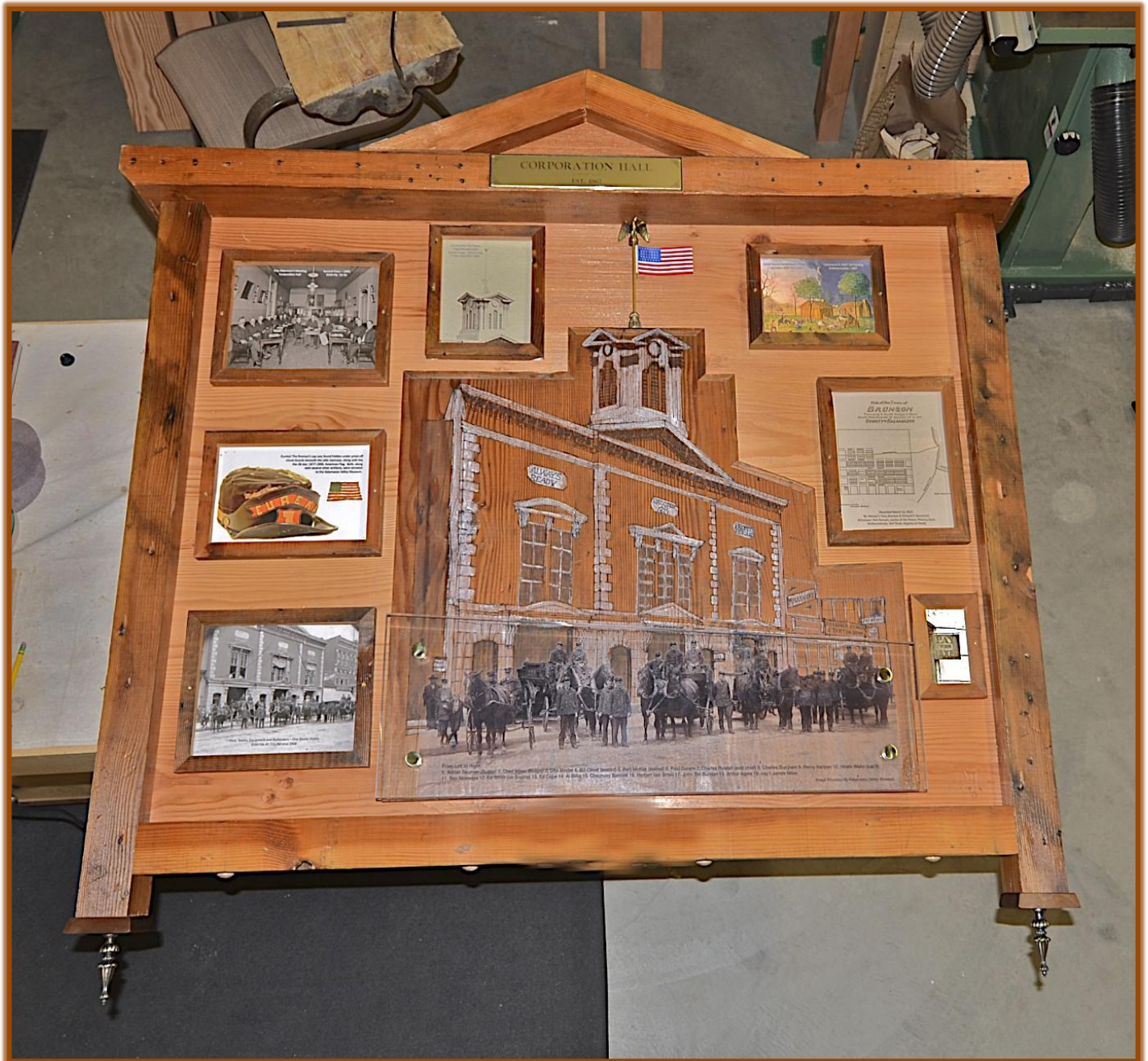
The next stop was to Patti's office where she advised that Catalyst had worked with Ken DeVisser AGIO IMAGING, Inc. located in one of Portage's industrial parks. Patti explained that the company undertakes a variety of corporate imaging projects from around the U.S. After visiting Ken it was perfect. The result was to use AGIO's talents to place the photograph on the back of 3/8" tempered iron free (no green) glass with the precise position of the fire teams, equipment and horses against the Hall, as they were captured in the Kalamazoo Valley Museum photograph 47.721.80. Wow, and now the project is on the correct edge of the curve!

Now, like the Gray Birch, the team stands out strikingly, but through the iron free glass and one can easily understand *How Patti Fell in Love with A Team of Nineteen Firemen, Nine Horses and Assorted Pumpers, Wagons and Equipment* when the project was being planned. The focal point of the project becomes the Kalamazoo Valley Museum's photo on glass despite its relative and otherwise innocuous position just above the cut-stone eyebrow lower frame beam. A quick calculation suggests it assumes about twelve percent of the overall 1867 Corporation Hall plate's surface.

For Ken's glass creation to become the focus, is a tribute to the dual historical role this image gives all of us and is just fine, as the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore's Gray Birch precedent has been already set for its focal status. It's also appropriate, since the Kalamazoo Valley Museum folks, at the writer's request, increased the dots per inch so greatly that the CD image appears it was taken yesterday!

When one views the etching-plate's glass or the photo itself, as referenced in Appendix XP – P10, the names of each of the fireman will become known, thanks to the depth of information of this wonderful image now etched on wood and glass for the future the image of which is on the following page.

The completed Etching and Back-plates



Appendix IV

The Kalamazoo Fire Department – Excerpts

Kalamazoo Public Library File

<http://www.kpl.gov/local-history/fires/fire-department.aspx>



Firemen's Hall, S. Burdick Street

The story of the Kalamazoo Fire Department begins on 5 June 1843, soon after the first charter of the Village of Kalamazoo became effective. The village trustees passed an ordinance requiring all homeowners and storekeepers to provide themselves with two ladders and buckets. The citizens were being told to fight fires themselves; the ordinance was later repealed in 1850.

A volunteer fire company, the Kalamazoo Hook and Ladder Company, was finally created on 11 March 1846. Other fire companies soon followed, including the Burr-Oak Engine Company, the Excelsior Fire Company, and the Star Fire Company. Arcadia Creek first provided the city's water supply, but because horses were not used, firemen literally had to run back and forth between the Creek and the fire with their buckets of water. In the 1840s, an elaborate system of cisterns was built downtown. Intended to serve as an adequate source of water for fighting fires, the cisterns were frequently emptied before the fire had been extinguished.

This lack of a reliable water supply motivated the village trustees to authorize the construction of a public water works in 1867. A large blaze on Academy Street in April 1869 hastened the construction of the plant, which became operational in October of that year.

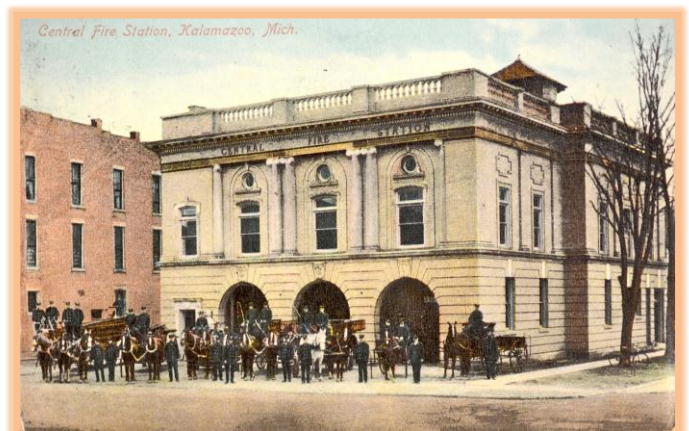
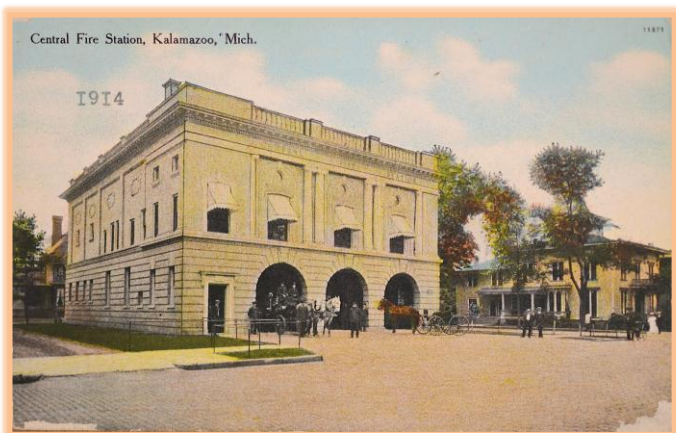
A Fire Department Develops

The city's first fire engine was bought second-hand in 1853, and a second engine was purchased soon after. Firemen's Hall, the general headquarters for the various fire companies, was completed in 1853 after several delays. Located at 136 South Burdick Street, the Hall served as Kalamazoo's center of social activity for many years; the building was demolished in January 1942. The *Kalamazoo Gazette* reported, "Kalamazoo can now boast of as fine a building...for lectures, concerts, exhibitions, parties, etc. as can be found in the state."

Kalamazoo Public Library Postcard Collection (uncataloged)



James Gregart Postcard Collection (cataloged)
Harrisville, MI



Kalamazoo's first fire alarm system was later installed in the clock tower of the First Baptist Church in 1855. Despite little financial support from the village government, the fire department by 1862 had nonetheless grown to three engines, three horse carts, a hook and ladder truck, over 1800 feet of hose, and 148 men in several companies. Corporation Hall, built in 1867, soon became the new home of the village fire companies and other civic and governmental groups.

Two of the original tenants included the Ladies Library Association and the Kalamazoo Public Library; the building also served as City Hall from 1884 until 1931. In 1870 the fire department was reorganized with four hose companies of twenty men each, and soon after firemen finally began to be paid for their work. A new Central Fire Station was constructed in 1907 on the corner of Burdick Street and Lovell Street. Responsible for protecting downtown, the building stood until it made way for Jacobson's (now the Epic Center) in 1959. The fire department first became motorized in 1916, with the last of the horse-drawn trucks being retired in 1924.

Kalamazoo's Most Memorable Fires

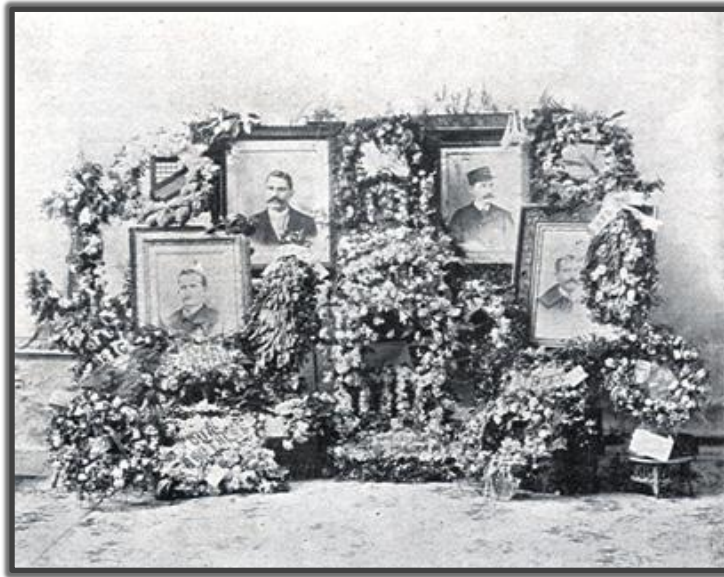
Perhaps the worst fire in Kalamazoo's history occurred on 26 February 1898 at the Hall Brothers Chemical Company, 453 North Church. Ten people were killed, including four firemen, and twenty-seven seriously injured. As large amounts of chemicals stored in the building mixed with the fire, explosions shook the building. One fireman was blown thirty feet into a snow bank, and debris from the blaze could be found three miles away. The fire made front-page news for ten consecutive days.

On 8 December 1909, a great fire consumed the Burdick Hotel. The hotel's 160 guests were rushed outside to safety, and no one was killed. The flames raged out of control for over fifteen hours, even with the support of the Battle Creek and Grand Rapids fire departments. Little remained of the hotel except the entrance. Rebuilt in 1911, the hotel was demolished in 1971 to make way for the Kalamazoo Center. An unsolved string of arson fires in the winter of 1925-26 destroyed three major downtown churches—First Congregational, First Presbyterian, and First Methodist, in the latter of which two firemen were killed and several others injured when part of the roof collapsed. Another blaze on 5 February 1945 destroyed the J.R. Jones' Sons and Company building on West Michigan Avenue and South Rose Street. Damage to the downtown landmark was over \$300,000.

Note: The writer witnessed and with an early Nikon took 8 sequential images of the five or so second demolition of the Hanselman Building on December 31, 1973 (not in 1971 per the above). They were taken from the fourth floor of the Courthouse. After the dust settled there was commotion at the northwest courthouse lawn. A 20 lb. rock from the Hanselman's foundation had blown up and arched over to hit the Courthouse's north approach and deflected onto a window frame of the first floor County Clerk's office.

There, it broke in two pieces with one glancing into the office and the other to the ground in approximate 1/3 - 2/3 chunks. Controlled Demolition, the contractor, initially exclaimed it was not possible but later recanted in front of the writer and the Sheriff's

Deputy accompanying him and paid for the restoration damages. It's a wonder that one of the many viewers on the north approach or employees in the Clerk's office was not seriously injured or killed outright. The Gazette carried the photo of the writer and rock over the next few days. Of course, a print of the image is in his possession.



Memorial display honoring firemen killed fighting the Hall Brothers fire in 1898. Although it isn't clear which man is which in the prior page's photograph, the men were Eugene Dole, George Halliday, Patrick McHugh and William Wagar.

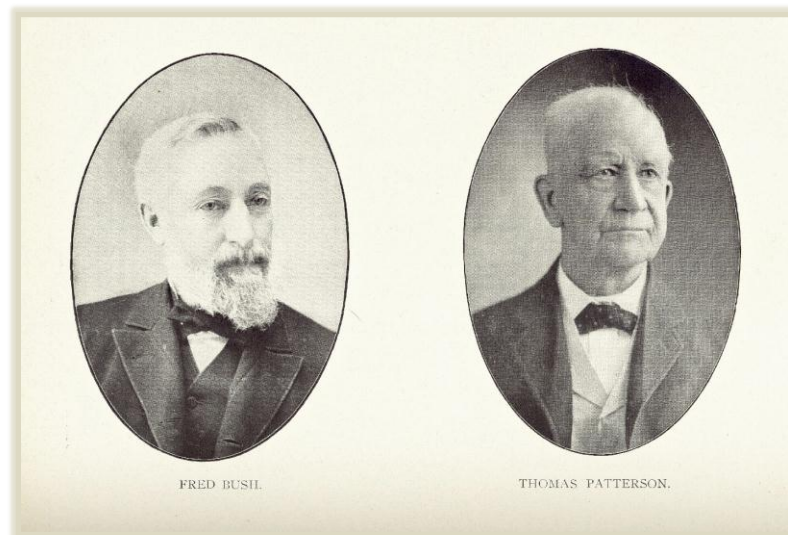
Written by Kris Rzepczynski, formerly of the Kalamazoo Public Library staff.
Page launched February 2007.

(Jim Gregart's electronically scanned Postcards added by writer)

Appendix V

Bush & Paterson Manufacturing/Construction Kalamazoo, Michigan

*"Bush & Paterson, at 56 North Burdick Street, manufacture doors, sash, blinds, and building material, windmills, fanning-mills and billiard table legs, and are also engaged very extensively in contracting and building, at present largely for railway companies. From 50 to 80 hands are employed, and an annual business is transacted amounting from \$150,000 to \$200,000. This firm is the oldest, without a change, in Kalamazoo County, having been established in 1856. A frame building was first occupied on the corner north of their present buildings and in the same block. Their present shops are built of brick, and are commodious and convenient. The firm has build four-fifths of the brick edifices in Kalamazoo, including the Ladies Library Building, Corporation Hall, and the county jail. Frederick Bush first came to Kalamazoo in 1844, from the City of New York. Five years of the time between then and 1856 he was away from the village. Thomas Paterson, also from New York City, arrived in 1856, the same year the partnership was established here. This is one of the most enterprising firms in Kalamazoo, and the patronage it receives is evidence of its popularity. Messrs. Bush & Paterson began the erection, in January 1880 next south of their office, of a two-story brick block, 80 x 55 feet in dimensions, to be used as stores and offices."*³⁸



³⁸ History of the Villages and Townships of Kalamazoo County, Everts and Abbot 1880 / page 259-260 / (JG)

In addition: "This old and well esteemed firm, which was one of the pioneer firms in construction work in Kalamazoo and concerned in much of the building in the early history of the place, furnished an impressive illustration of the value of harmony as well as enterprise in business. The partners were associated in their business for a period of thirty-six years, and during the whole of that time they kept but one pocketbook between them and shared their profits and losses equally, without ever having a word of disagreement over anything. For some years after they began operations they were obliged to take the pay for their work in trade and merchandise, cash being scarce in the community.

The partnership was started in May 1856, and while it prospered from the start, the first cash job it did was the erection of the first fair buildings in 1859 on the ground where "Flora Temple" made her great record as a trotter. Mr. Bush was born in England and when he was about five years old the family came to this country and located in Orange county, N. Y., but three years later, or in 1840, Mr. Bush, then a lad of eight, was brought to Kalamazoo by Mr. Tomlinson, who was in business in that city, and with whom he remained about three years. He was then apprenticed to the trade of a carpenter under the direction of A. Kneer, and he remained with him until 1848.

In that year he returned to New York City and there was employed at his trade a number of years, helping to build the St. Nicholas Hotel and other imposing structures. After this hotel was completed he passed a year in it as clerk, and in 1855 came again to Kalamazoo, and the next May induced Mr. Paterson, whom he had met in New York, to join him in business here. They put up B. M. Austin's house, on the hill, the first year, and then built a small shop for themselves on North Burdick Street where they remained three years. They were busily occupied all the time, erecting most of the principal buildings in those days. The partnership lasted until the death of Mr. Bush in 1892, and since then Mr. Paterson has retired. Mr. Bush was married in 1857 to Miss Louisa Hines, a native of this county.

They had three children, Frank, born in 1859, Benjamin born in 1861, and another who died in infancy. In 1869 the firm built the present jail and also remodeled the old courthouse. In 1867 they added a planing mill to their plant and began the manufacture of legs for billiard tables, which they continued five years. Then they added a factory for making sash, doors and blinds and a general lumber and building material trade. The Academy was erected by a stock company, which could not run it successfully and Messrs. Bush & Paterson purchased the building, which is now owned by Mr. Bush's son Benjamin, and managed by him. Mr. Bush always took an active part in pushing forward the progress of the city and the surrounding country." ³⁹

³⁹ Compendium of History and Biography of Kalamazoo County, Mich. *Illustrated* pg 242

Appendix VI

Lucinda Stone / Ladies Library Association

“During the antebellum period, Kalamazoo County also established itself as a leader in Michigan education. In 1833 the Michigan Territorial Legislature chartered the Baptist-sponsored Michigan and Huron Institute “to promote the knowledge of all those branches of education usually taught in academies and collegiate institutions.” The institute opened in Kalamazoo in 1836. The following year the University of Michigan opened a branch in Kalamazoo. The two academies soon merged, with the university providing financial support to the newly named Kalamazoo Literary Institute. The closing of the university’s branches in the late 1840s seemed to spell doom for the institute: however, the school’s new principal, Dr. James A. B. Stone, and his wife, Lucinda, not only resolved the institute’s financial problems, but actively involved it in contemporary reform movements, such as abolition, temperance and woman’s rights. (Mrs. Stone operated the school’s female department and was later instrumental in the post-Civil War campaign to enroll women in the University of Michigan.) In 1855 the institute became Kalamazoo College and received the right to confer degrees.”⁴⁰

“In the early 1860s, the conservative Baptist administrators of Kalamazoo College became critical of the Stones. They felt that James had mismanaged the college’s finances, and disapproved of their focus on co-education. They also disapproved of Lucinda’s teaching of the poems of Lord Byron, as well as her use of publications like *Atlantic Monthly*. The Stones resigned in late 1863, and Lucinda started a school of her own at their home, which she ran until the house burned in 1866.

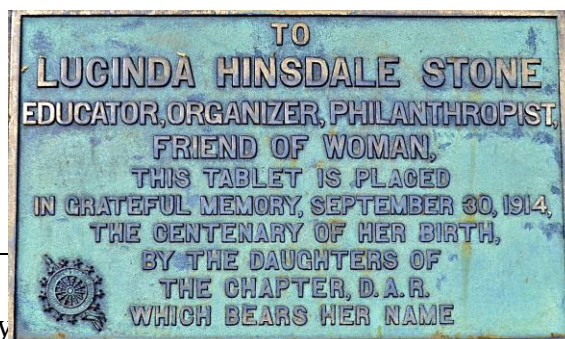
Lucinda Stone’s role as a college teacher may have ended, but her influence on society was far from over. The next great period of her life would begin. From the late 1860s through the 1880s, she organized traveling schools and took female students on several trips to Europe where they learned about history and culture.

She re-organized a club that originated as a weekly Saturday gathering at her home for literary discussions in 1852. The Ladies Library Association would become the first women’s organization in the United States to build a clubhouse. The building was completed in 1879. The Ladies Library Association is the oldest women’s club in Michigan and the third oldest in the country. Women’s study clubs were not merely social organizations.

⁴⁰ History of Kalamazoo County Michigan (excerpt) swmi.directory.org/History_of_Kalamazoo_County.html

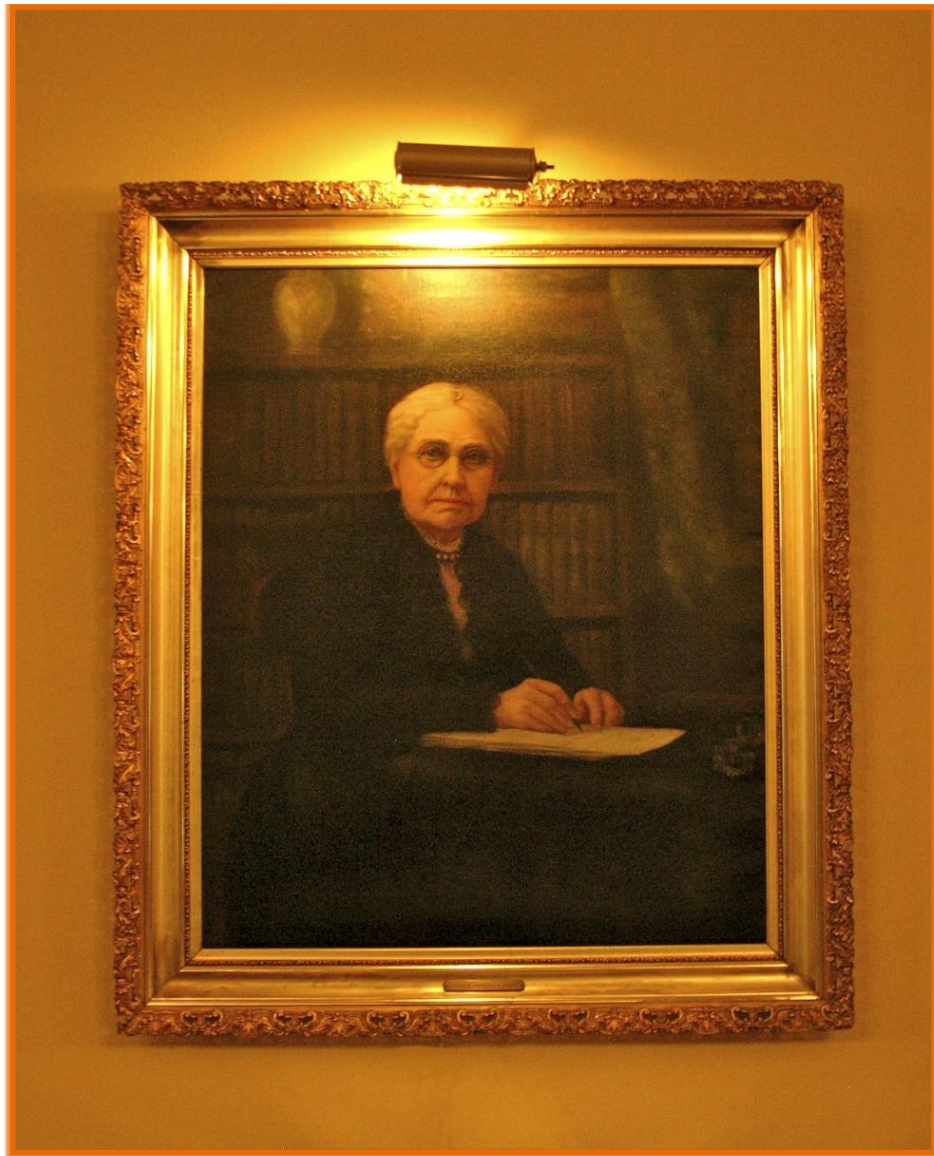
In an era when most colleges would not admit women, study clubs were one of the few avenues of continuing education open to them. She spoke at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago as a representative of women's clubs."⁴¹

The first, just below, is a brass-plate inscription on a boulder on the former Jail Square, of today's Bronson Park. The second, a beautiful portrait on the following page, is found adorning the Ladies Library Association building's first floor south wall. Both lie within the west half of the southwest quarter of **section 15**. The third is at the entrance of the Kalamazoo Radisson's Stone Theater, which is named in her honor within the east half of the southwest quarter of **section 15**. The first, shown below, includes the Writer's 2012 electronic images, Nikon D-7000 – Nikkor AF-S 24.0-120.0mm 1:4 G ED Lens.



⁴¹ kpl.gov/local-history

**Ladies Library Association Building
Lucinda Stone's Portrait
Lower South Wall**



Writer's 2006 electronic image, Nikon D-200
Nikkor AF-S 24.0-120.0mm 1:4 G ED Lens
Graciously Made Possible by the
Ladies Library Association

Appendix VII

Lincoln's 1856 Bronson Park Speech

"Besides excelling in antebellum agriculture and education, Kalamazoo was the site of Abraham Lincoln's only Michigan speech. Not yet the well-known figure he would become after his 1858 U.S. Senate campaign in Illinois against Stephen Douglas, Lincoln addressed the thousands who gathered in Kalamazoo on 27 August 1856 to demonstrate their support for John C. Fremont, the Republican Party's first presidential candidate.

Speaking to an audience described by one historian as "full of hell and hilarity-hell for Democrats and slave-owners, and hilarity for the Young Republicans of Michigan" Lincoln agreed that in light of the slave controversy in Kansas, the question of slavery "should be not only the greatest question, but the sole question" on their minds. But the Illinoisan refused to incite the crowd's sectional ill feeling. Others were not so circumspect. Detroit's Zachariah Chandler argued, "Let Kansas come in as a slave state and the North will make it a desert."

Recognizing that a sectional party like the Republican needed Democratic converts to achieve political success, Lincoln concluded by asking his political opponents to realize that their party's refusal to oppose slavery's extension had turned the Democrats "away from their love of liberty." Lincoln urged, "Throw off these things, and come to the rescue of this great principle of equality ... And not to Democrats alone do I make this appeal, but to all who love these great and true principles. Come and keep coming! Strike, and strike again! So sure as God lives, the victory shall be ours!" Fremont lost the 1856 presidential election, though Michigan and Kalamazoo County voted Republican. Four years later, both the state and county again supported the Republican presidential nominee, and Lincoln became president."⁴²

"Abraham Lincoln denounced slavery in a speech at Kalamazoo, MI. On August 27, 1856 Abraham Lincoln traveled from Chicago to Kalamazoo in order to deliver an anti-slavery speech and to campaign for John Fremont, the presidential candidate of the Republican Party. Though Abraham Lincoln was later elected the 16th president of the United States in 1860 and then

⁴² History of Kalamazoo County Michigan (excerpt) swmi.directory.org/History_of_Kalamazoo_County.html

led the Union throughout the American civil war, in 1856 he was not widely known outside of Illinois. However, he would soon rise to national

and historical prominence as the individual most commonly associated with America's commitment to racial equality and to the realization of democratic principals.

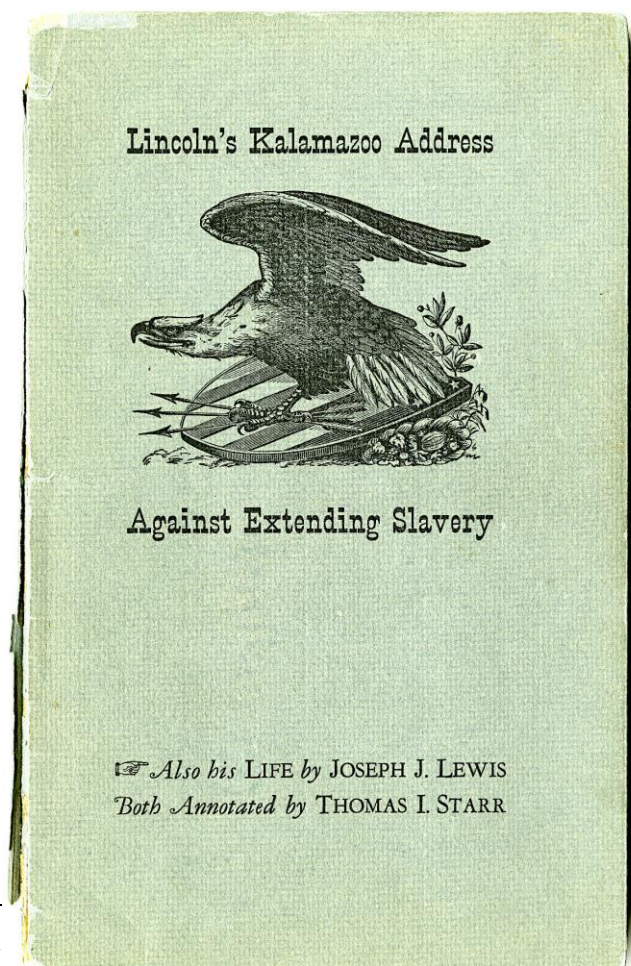
Regardless, the issues that Lincoln eventually came to personify had already produced much interest and controversy in the United States by 1856. Indeed, the number of people at the rally in Kalamazoo's Bronson Park had numbered approximately 30,000 by 9 a.m. that morning. Lincoln arrived shortly before he was scheduled to speak at 2 p.m.



Clark Historical Library Central Michigan University
Website's 1856 Lincoln Photograph

He argued strongly against slavery: "...the question of slavery, at the present day, should be not only the greatest question, but the sole question...we have been deploring the fact that slavery exists among us." He also countered common Southern justifications of slavery: "They insist

that slavery has a right to spread. They defend it upon principal. They insist that their slaves are better off than Northern freemen. What a mistaken view do these men have of Northern Laborers! They think that men are always to remain laborers here-but there is no such class. The man who labored for another last year, this year labors for himself, and next year he will hire others to labor for him." Abraham Lincoln likely spent the night in Kalamazoo, but it is not known where. He returned to Chicago the following day. For a complete transcript of Lincoln's Kalamazoo speech, see Roy P. Basler (ed.), *Abraham Lincoln: His Speeches and Writings* (Cleveland, The World Publishing Company, 1946). For more information on Lincoln's visit to Michigan visit the Cass District Library's website at <http://cass.lib.mi.us>." ⁴³



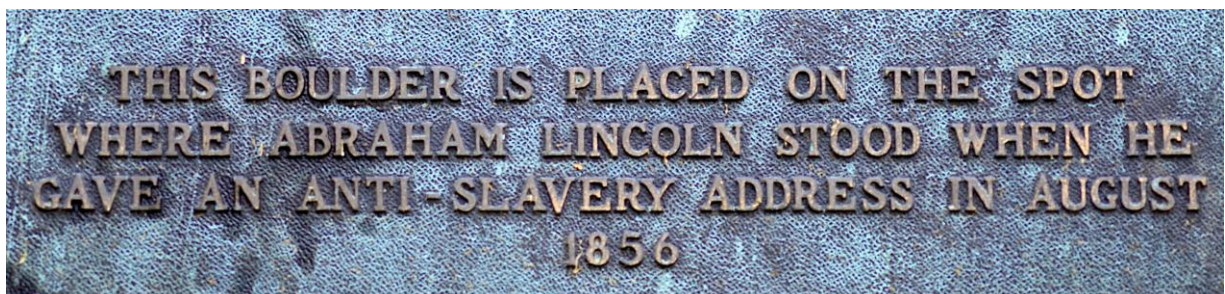
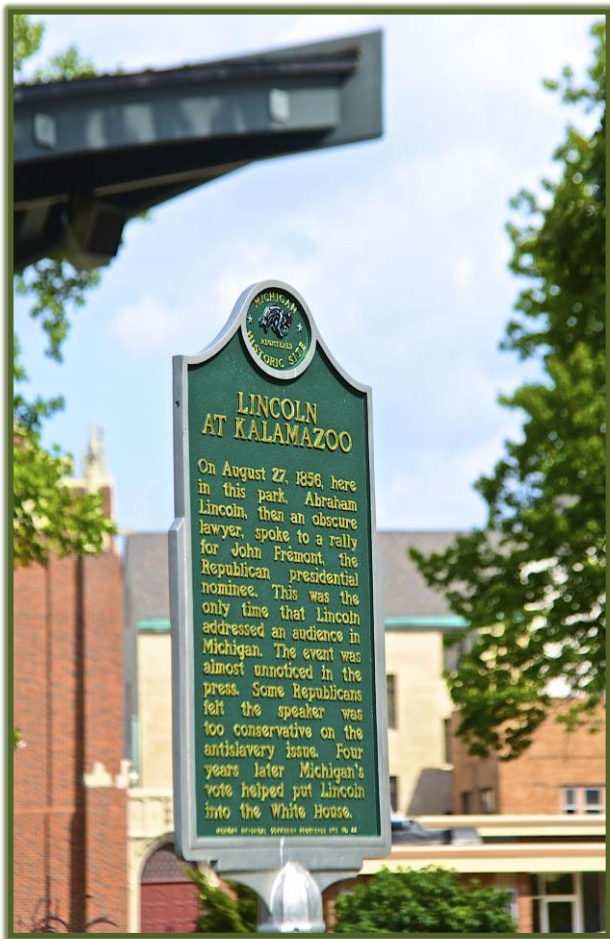
Electronic Image

Lincoln's 1856 Address
Graciously Provided by
Kalamazoo Valley Museum

⁴³ Cl

Lincoln's stop in Kalamazoo is commemorated in Bronson Park, lying in the west half of the southwest quarter of **Section 15**, as shown with three writer images on the following page with Nikon 7000 - 105mm AF Micro Nikkor 1:2.8 Lens & AFS Nikkor 24-120 1:4 Lens.

Lincoln Memorials



Appendix VIII

Summarization of Quotations on Diversity and Inclusion

The mission of the writer's current employer, the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, is to improve the quality of life **for all** in the greater Kalamazoo area. With this mission, we pay particular attention to the inclusion of diverse voices. A diversity policy adopted in 2000, guides our work, and compels us to be a leader of inclusion in the community. We believe that the many diverse perspectives in our community are a critical component to a democratic society and the awareness of differences and the full inclusion of our citizenry is an important part of Kalamazoo's productivity, performance, and sustainability.

This summary of quotations from the contents of this writing provides a degree of contrast to our community's norms of the past, as well as its leadership through many of its early residents and guests.

1. Page 3: "An elderly Potawatomi Indian stood on South Street in downtown Kalamazoo, facing Bronson Park. It was the 1870's. She had returned to visit the place of her birth. Sad-eyed and silent, she looked westward, feeling lost. She scanned the park looking for something familiar, a landmark to remind her of those long-ago days of her childhood. Her eyes focused on a grassy knoll in the southwestern corner of the park and she exclaimed:
2.
O, I know where I am now for there is the mound on which I used to play when I was a girl. That used to be our attractive playground. There, long years ago, I used to meet with many other children of our people and on top of that mound, and on its green side, we spent many happy days."
3. Page 13: "Eventually the surveyor's line passed by the County Administration Building at the corner of North Rose Street and Kalamazoo Avenue to just north of the Amtrak rails and, most appropriately very close to or within the Reverend Martin Luther King Memorial Park (the connections comes in several ways later on). There it intersects an east to west survey line. Likewise, at South Street another survey line also runs east and west"
4. Pages 15-16: "Once the ice shields left and a warming environment followed, the evolution of Humans, migrating from Africa over the vastness of the Asian and European continents, brought hominoid life to North America via Alaska, and the Atlantic Ocean. Initially the First Nation peoples, the Moundbuilders, Sioux, Maxcoutin, Miami and lastly the Pottawatomi Tribe, a branch of the greater

Algonquin people after migrating south and southeast, began to settle in this area now called Southwest Michigan.

In 1680 the first white men journeyed through Prairie Ronde and Climax areas. As expansion occurred the Congressional Ordinance of July 13, 1787 provided "there shall be formed in said territory, not less than three nor more than five states". Broken lines on the map on the following page defined the original boundaries and three "states": Eastern State (numbers 1,2,3,4), Middle State (numbers 5,6,7,8,9) and Western State (numbers 10,11,12,13,14,15).

The Indian Treaty of 1795 opened the Northwest Territory to Settlement and set aside the Match-e-b-nash-e-wish Reservation, a large portion of what was to become Kalamazoo County. Then the Indian Treaty of 1833 in part cruelly reads ARTICLE 3d "All the Indians residing on the said reservations in Michigan shall remove there from within three years from this date".

According to Dr. Willis Dunbar's *Kalamazoo and How it Grew* the first white resident of the area was probably a British fur trader named Burrell who in 1795 spent the winter at his trading post near what is now Riverside Cemetery. Other followed: Frenchman Numaiville and the 1st permanent Trading Post in 1828, Bazel Harrison another early settler in late 1828 and Titus Bronson on June 21, 1829."

5. Page 17: "In 1831 Kalamazoo County was sized to its current 576 square miles. Bronson Village was platted on March 12, 1831. Shortly after Enoch Harris, the first African American settler, arrived June 30, 1831. Arcadia Township was then formed on July 30, 1831 overlaying the northern half of today's Kalamazoo County with Brady Township following on October 5, 1831 covering the southern half." ~ "Messrs. Burrell, Numaiville, Harrison, Bronson and the many other early settlers must have thought similarly." Of course, the first nations people surely felt the same about their beautiful life giving home – think about the continuous increased diversity and inclusion most profess today!
6. Page 18: "Over the course of the first 50 – 75 years after American settlers arrived, virtually all of these archeological features were destroyed, usually by farmers expanding their fields. Line drawings and written accounts are all that remain. Even the mound in Bronson Park has been excavated and reconstructed so frequently –for a time, it was excavated and used as a root cellar to store vegetables for the County Jail—that it cannot be considered a genuine Native American structure."

The 1869 Kalamazoo County Directory described the construction of the River House in 1834. "In excavating for the cellar for this hotel, a great number of Indian skeletons and loose bones were met with which were thrown into the river"...

"This location, near where the Michigan Avenue bridge crosses the Kalamazoo River today, was one of at least three Native American burial

grounds in the downtown area. Another was located on the northwest corner of Park Street and Kalamazoo Avenue, while a third was found on

the northwest corner of Rose Street and Michigan Avenue. Beyond the disrespect shown for these cemeteries, the early residents destroyed potentially valuable archaeological evidence.” ...

“Modern methods and techniques, as well as a recognition of the importance of the precise location in which artifacts are found at an archaeological site, would not have been widely known in the early 19th century. Today, however, when these sites are encountered, scholars and researches work with native cultural groups to ensue respectful and careful exploration.”

6. Page 21: It would be several decades, not until 1815, that surveyors would start the survey of the Michigan Territory. Then, after the conclusion of the War of 1812, they began mapping the Lower Peninsula. They drew a hypothetical line from near Sault Ste. Marie to Defiance, Ohio. All townships would be marked off in vertical ranges, either east or west of this “meridian.” The meridian is 84 degrees 22 minutes 24 seconds West Longitude. (Writer’s note: the reference line was selected as the north-south line as defined in the 1807 Treaty of Detroit with the Michigan Native Americans – the line was surveyed by Benjamin Hough in April 1815.)
7. Page 24: “Pioneer men like Titus Bronson had the opportunity to range over the wilderness enjoying the richness of the wildlife and scenery. Pioneer women like Sally Bronson had to toil indoors, often in crude cabins bereft of windows, deprived not only of friends and neighbors, but even of the simple joy of looking at the sunlight and enjoying the seasons. Pioneer women, at times, lived hideously hard lives.”
8. Page 40: “The various plats and additions which have been made and put upon record since 1831 number over 60. The area is two and one-half miles square, covering the equivalent of 61/4 sections, or exactly 4000 acres. Five-sixths of the present Village lie within the Indian reservation, -- *Matchebenashewish*.”
9. Page 51, Even lone woman; isn’t cut-stone as she the gentlemen in



though the she beautiful in stands behind 1884?



10. Pages 79-80: She (Lucinda Stone) re-organized a club that originated as a weekly Saturday gathering at her home for literary discussions in 1852. The Ladies Library Association would become the first women's organization in the United States to build a clubhouse. The building was completed in 1879. The Ladies Library Association is the oldest women's club in Michigan and the third oldest in the country. Women's study clubs were not merely social organizations.

Page 85: The two academies soon merged, with the university providing financial support to the newly named Kalamazoo Literary Institute. The closing of the university's branches in the late 1840s seemed to spell doom for the institute: however, the school's new principal, Dr. James A. B. Stone, and his wife, Lucinda, not only resolved the institute's financial problems, but actively involved it in contemporary reform movements, such as abolition, temperance and woman's rights.

Page 85: She re-organized a club that originated as a weekly Saturday gathering at her home for literary discussions in 1852. The Ladies Library Association would become the first women's organization in the United States to build a clubhouse. The building was completed in 1879. The Ladies Library Association is the oldest women's club in Michigan and the third oldest in the country. Women's study clubs were not merely social organizations.

11. Pages 82-83: "Abraham Lincoln denounced slavery in a speech at Kalamazoo, MI. On August 27, 1856 Abraham Lincoln traveled from Chicago to Kalamazoo in order to deliver an anti-slavery speech and to

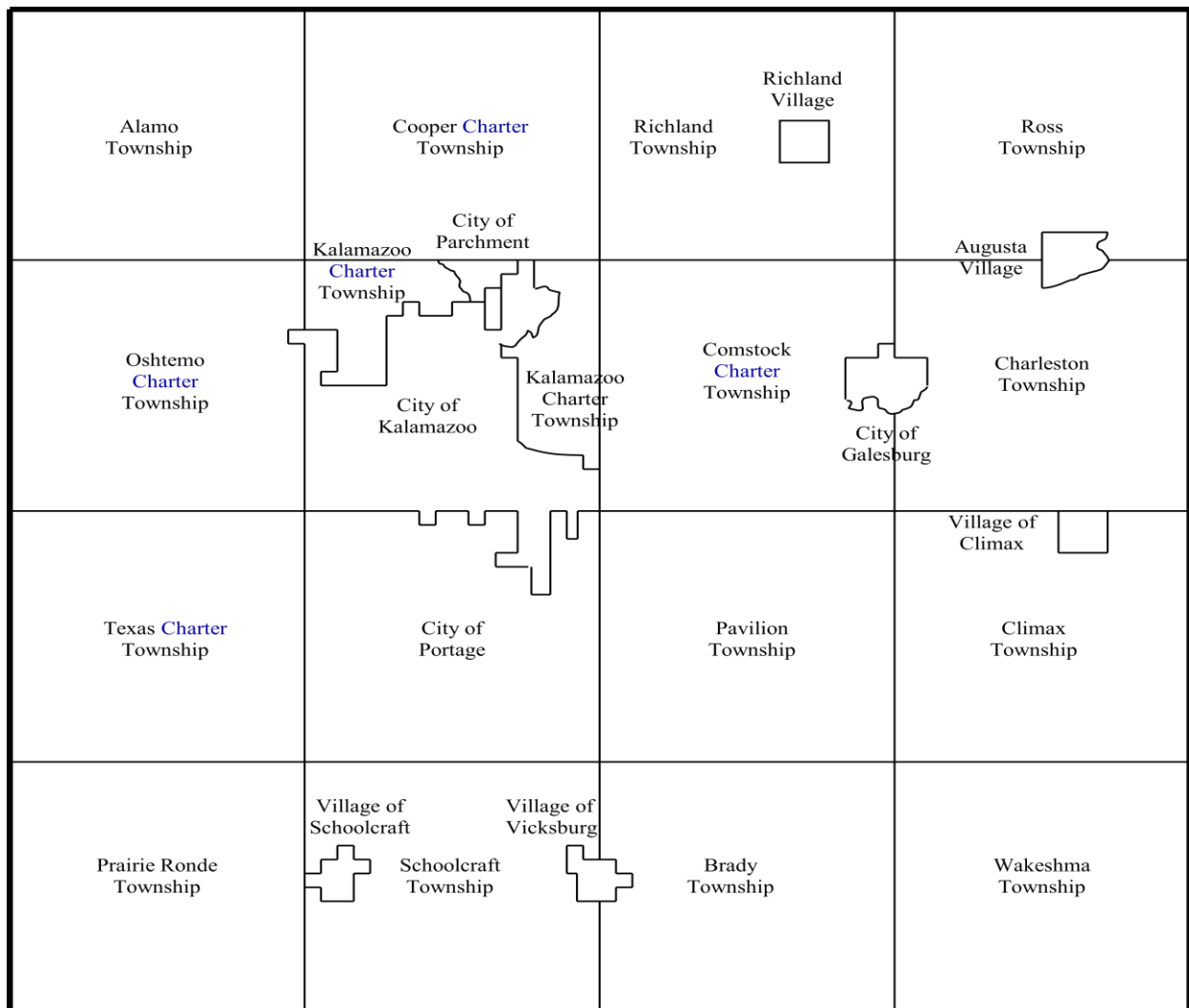
campaign for John Fremont, the presidential candidate of the Republican Party. Though Abraham Lincoln was later elected the 16th president of the United States in 1860 and then led the Union throughout the American civil

war, in 1856 he was not widely known outside of Illinois. However, he would soon rise to national and historical prominence as the individual most commonly associated with America's commitment to racial equality and to the realization of democratic principals.

Pages 89-90: He argued strongly against slavery: "...the question of slavery, at the present day, should be not only the greatest question, but the sole question...we have been deploring the fact that slavery exists among us." He also countered common Southern justifications of slavery: "They insist that slavery has a right to spread. They defend it upon principal. They insist that their slaves are better off than Northern freemen. What a mistaken view do these men have of Northern Laborers! They think that men are always to remain laborers here-but there is no such class. The man who labored for another last year, this year labors for himself, and next year he will hire others to labor for him."

Appendix IX

Present Day (2012) Kalamazoo County Government Structure⁴⁴



A county, 5 charter townships, 10 general law townships, 5 villages and 4 charter cities – 25 in total. Add 9 school districts, 6 overlapping school districts, 5 intermediate school

⁴⁴ Twenty-five units of government: County, 10 townships, 5 charter townships, 5 villages and 4 home rule cities

districts, 3 community college districts, 5 downtown development districts, several tax-capturing districts and one might conclude it is a maze.

Appendix X

A Collection of SW1/4 S15 T2S R11W Images and Related Stories / Images

Image A

This image is most certainly after 1867, as the flagpole is affixed to the top area of the pediment below the Tower, and as noted in image E. This image was graciously provided by the Kalamazoo Public Museum, however it has no associated data.



Image B

Corporation Hall Upper Façade and Tower

This view looking approximately southwest from Farmer's Alley, while showing the intricacies of the piles of wood and stacks of barrels at the backside of a grocery store, is most likely on the east side of Burdick Street opposite and a bit north of Corporation Hall. What's perplexing is that the photo seems obvious to have been taken from a second story of another building perhaps fronting on Portage Street. Possibly that could be the Michigan Building, which appears to have a height approximately equal to the grocery store.

It is particularly precious with its view of the top face and Tower of Corporation Hall – the latter being the page 8 photograph, which was co-joined with the page 7 photograph for the etching of Corporation Hall.

It is the writer's electronic image of Kalamazoo Public Library History Room File P-260, circa 1867-1875, using a Nikon D-7000 - 105mm AF Micro Nikkor 1:2.8 lens. Per file P-260, visible in the background are spires of the First Presbyterian Church (left), Corporation Hall (middle), and Fireman's Hall (right).



Image C

City Aldermen Meeting

If one views the Corporation Hall image on page 7 they will notice the middle set of windows is wider than the two outside sets. This image of the City Aldermen's Meeting, Kalamazoo, 1905 is from the Kalamazoo Valley Museum's file KVM 53.36 (photo # 19617), showing the inside of Corporation Hall. Given the width, it is the writer's conjecture that the room may well be in the middle of the second floor in front of the second floor set of windows mentioned above.

The image's fine clarity is partly the lens of the time, but also due to the Museum graciously upping the DPI (dots per inch) of the image to 400 DPI.



Image D

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum's electronic image of a Postcard of Burdick Street, circa 1920 with Corporation Hall on the left. File # 1023 (74/389.1)



Image E

This scene is Kalamazoo Valley Museum's file KVM 2009.40.1 (jpeg file 20580) described as: "Picture postcard of South Burdick Street looking north. Postmarked August 5, 1912".

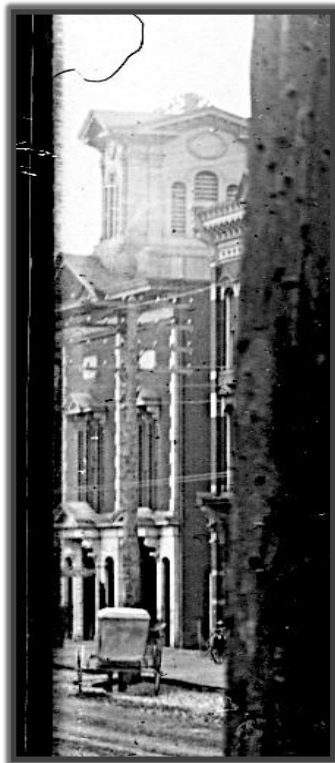
The image is so clear of Corporation Hall and one might notice the position of the flagpole at the top of the pediment, as in Image D vs. it being above the tower in Image B in the 1867 - 1875 time period.



Image F

Kalamazoo Public Library electronic 300 DPI scan of photograph History Room File P-248, circa 1867-1875. The image looks southwest from a point, which today would be in front of the Kalamazoo Valley Community College's Media Arts Center, with good detail of storefronts and horses and buggies parked on the street (writer's cropped image of KPL file P-248 of CORPORATION HALL in the left frame).

The weather that day was rainy, and judging by the wrap on several of the horses, see the white horse tied to the corner post, it was not too nice of a day. Studying those standing (the photographer's lens and shutter speeds were much too low to stop motion in the days of early photography) detects longer outer clothing on the women suggesting this may have been an earlier spring or latter fall season.



CORPORATION HALL is visible between the utility pole and the left side of the KPL image and the image's left side (see author's cropped electronic image of CORPORATION HALL in the left frame).

Moving up the street (north) DUTCH ARNOLD'S SALOON is visible just to the right of the utility pole on the second building from the corner. Walking up the sidewalk amidst several women shoppers, one passes a small CIGAR sign hanging from store right at the backside of the wagon.

The sign on the left corner of the corner building identifies the KALAMAZOO NATIONAL BANK – CAPITAL \$150,000; additionally the horizontal sign just above the lower set of front windows is KALAMAZOO NATIONAL BANK. The sign on the left corner reads AGENT HARTFORD FIRE INSURANCE – CAPITAL \$1,000,000.

The sign just below and to the right of the utility pole (next to the horse's muzzle) identifies BOOTH KALAMAZOO REAL ESTATE AND INSURANCE AGENT. Sandwiched between the top set of windows, is a sign identifying the address as 101 Main (now Michigan) and 101 REIDSEMA'S PHOTO GALLERY, which later located in the successor Kalamazoo Building in Image G that follows. The large horizontal sign at the top of the left corner is 101 – J.M REIDSEMA – PHOTOGRAPHER - 101

Just below the top set of windows the sign identifies the HOME INSURANCE CO.N.Y. stating its CAPITAL AT OVER TWO MILLION DOLLARS. On the building to the right of the corner building, the HARDWARE sign is identifiable. Just above the sidewalk windows is the name of EDWARDS AND CHAMBERLIN, presumably, the name of the hardware store. Just above that sign is another reading DETROIT FIRE INSURANCE - \$500,000 – BOOTH. Just below the *ED* in EDWARDS AND CHAMBERLIN is a small white sign reading M. WESTBROOK – DENTIST; and to its left and slightly down is another, but darker sign, reading the same.

Next door to the right, the sign above the sidewalk windows reads BROWNSON & RANKIN - a potential female customer, looking through the right set of windows is contemplating the purchase of ladies clothing she studies through the window. The horizontal mid-building horizontal sign above reads CARGILL & MILLER. The two vertical signs just below CARGILL & MILLER between the windows read, REAL ESTATE AND LOAN BROKERS. Just to its right on the next building is a small sign at the lower edge of the top window reading K-P.

Image G

Kalamazoo Public Library electronic 300 DPI scan of the Kalamazoo National Bank Building photograph from History Room File P-1060. The image, photographed by John Reidsema, Kalamazoo in 1908 looks southwest, and as in Image E, from a point, which today would be in front of the Kalamazoo Valley Community College's Media Arts Center

As in image E, Corporation Hall visible at far left at the left side of the image (see writer's cropped version file P-1060 of Corporation Hall in the left frame).

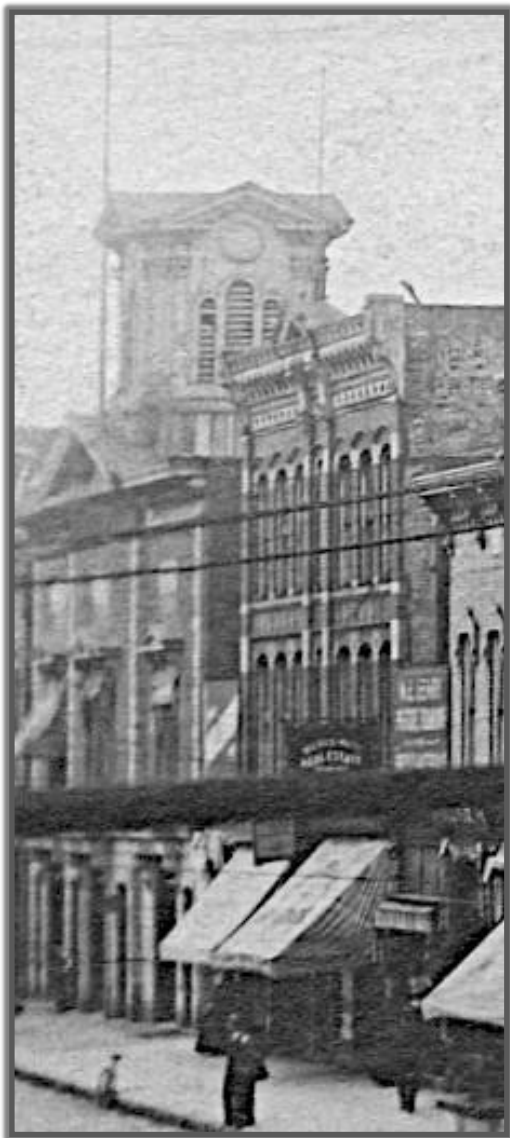


Image H



Writer's Electronic Image – October 21, 2012
Nikon D-7000 – AFS Nikkor12-24mm 1:4G lens

Images 1 & 2

The two following images are respectively, the Kalamazoo Valley Museum's image #2973 and #17175 of the 4th of July parade down Burdick in 1889. To one extent or another, Corporation Hall can be seen clearly on the left of each image.

While the photographer is unknown it seems obvious from the lateral American flag at the very bottom – right of each image just below the firearm jutting out, that the cameraperson for each image was the same.

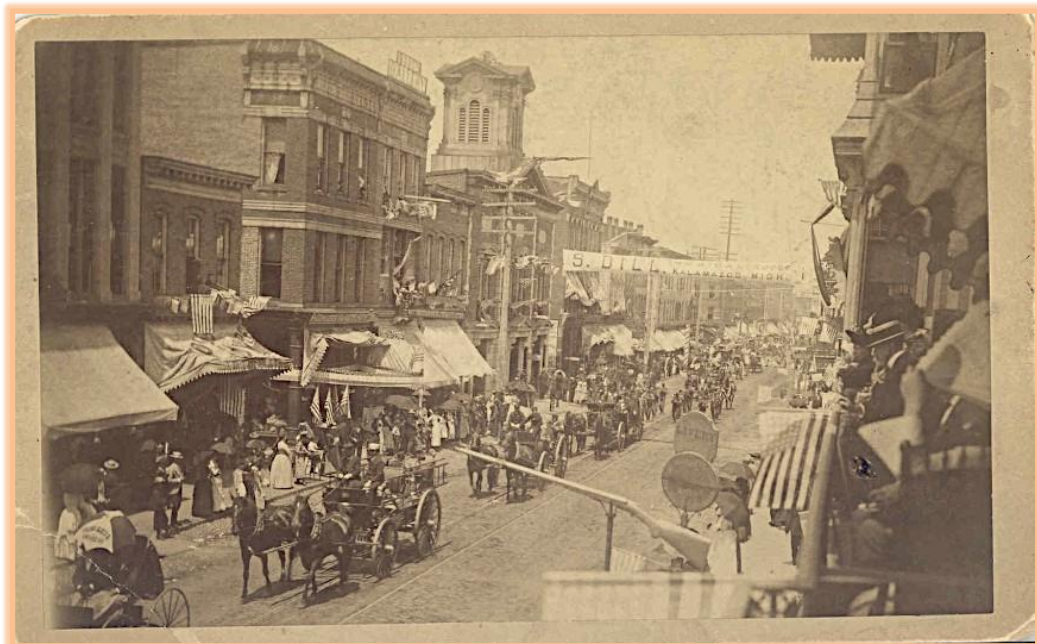
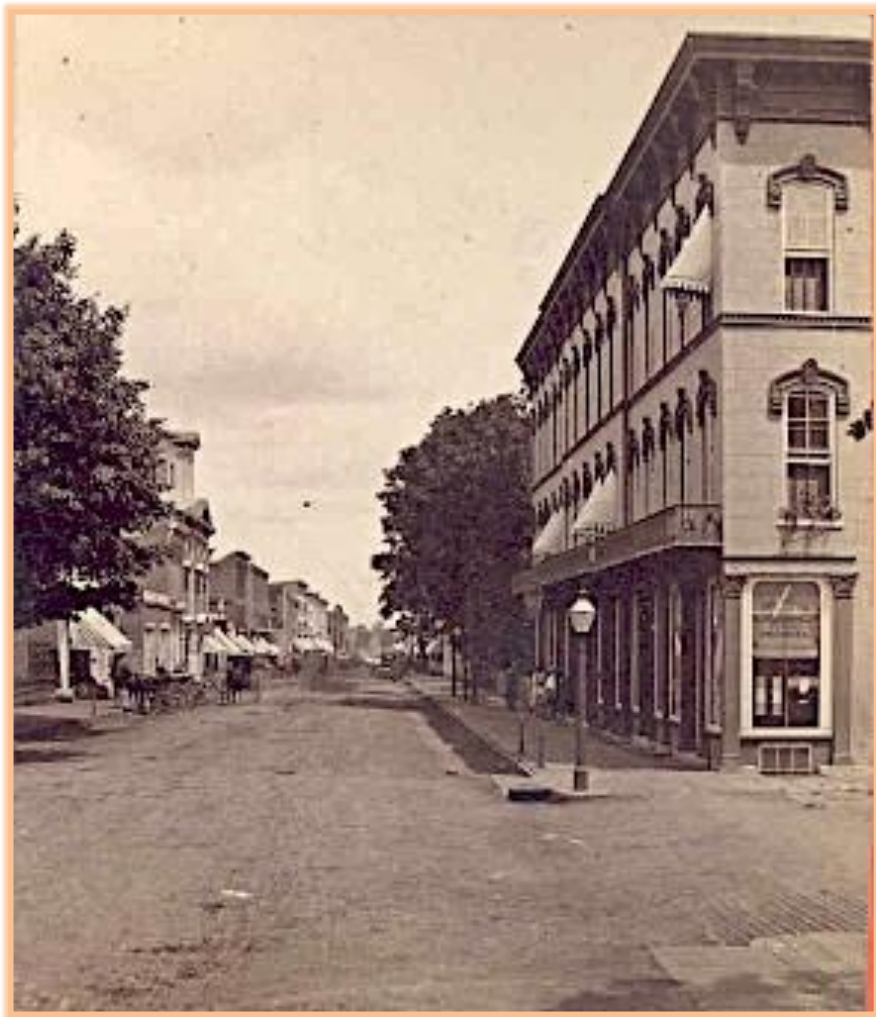


Image J

This Kalamazoo Valley Museum image #2745 (80.409), an early stereo view image of Burdick Street, looking north from Lovell Street, 1873-1880 does, although barely, show Corporation Hall on the left just beyond the row of trees (most likely Burr-Oak trees).

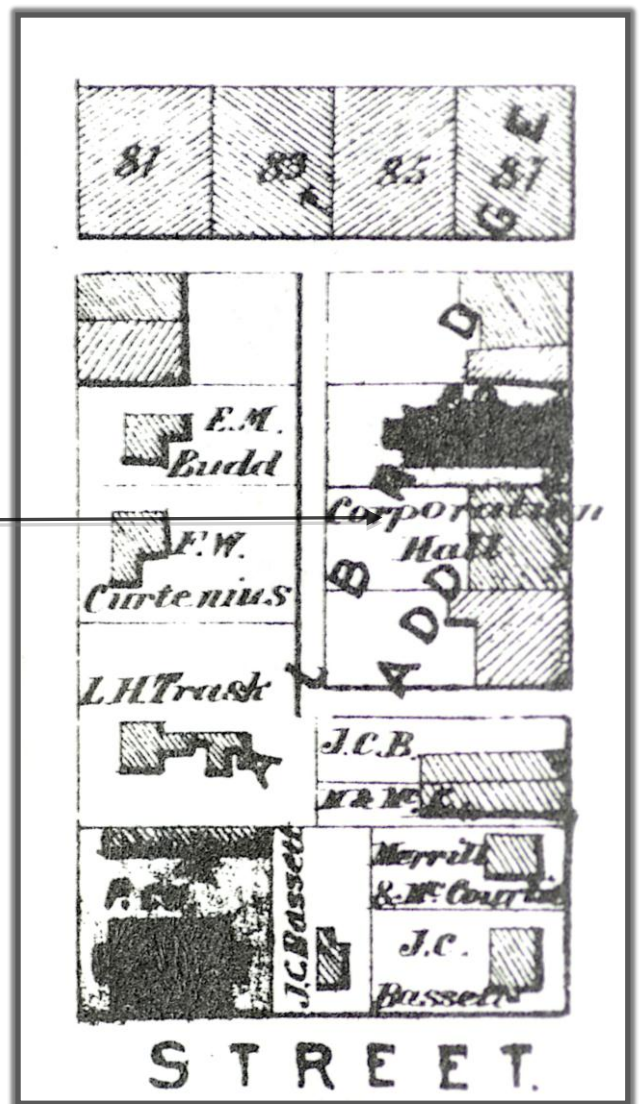
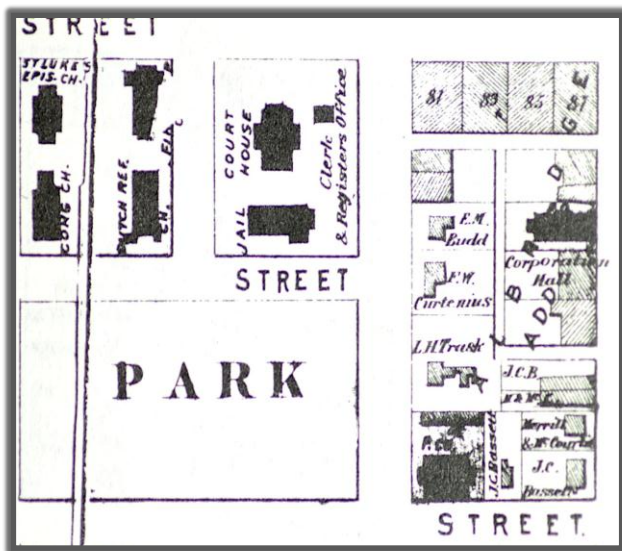


Images K 1 & 2

The two images below are the writer's electronic images from the Kalamazoo Public Library's Combined Atlas of Kalamazoo 1873-1896 – KPL file H977.417 H67; using a Nikon D-7000 - 105mm AF Micro Nikkor 1:2.8 lens. The left image is the life size image of the block taken from one of the many twenty by twenty seven-inch pages of the quite heavy file in the History Room. Both images are positioned north and south.

The left image is split by Rose Street (formerly Main) showing the Courthouse, churches and Bronson Park at the bottom.

The right image is enlarged from the right or east portion of the left image to show the footprint of Corporation Hall lying between two alleys.

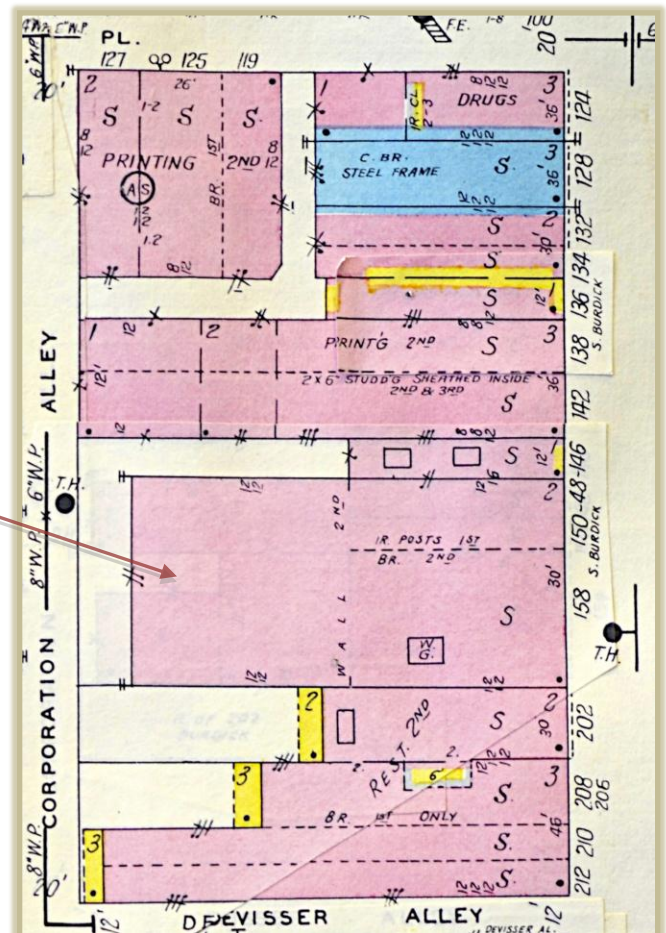
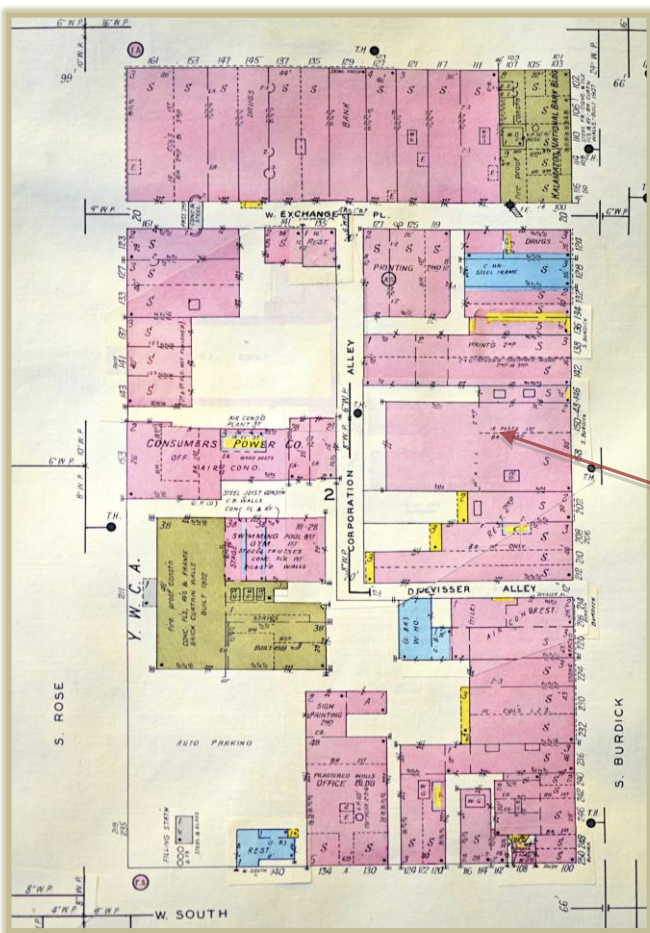


Images L 1 & 2

The two images below, both positioned north and south, are the author's electronic images of 1932 insurance diagrams using a Nikon D-7000 - 105mm AF Micro Nikkor 1:2.8 lens of the Kalamazoo Public Library file H912.774s 19.2; Insurance Maps of Kalamazoo; Sanborn Map Co CR 1932.

The left image is the life size image of the block taken from one of the many twenty by twenty seven-inch pages of the quite heavy file in the History Room.

The right image is cropped from the left image to show Corporation Hall between Exchange Place and DEVISSER Alley, as indicated at the image's bottom.



Images M 1 & 2

The two images below, also positioned north and south and are cropped from the City of Kalamazoo's 2011 aerial image shown in full in the second image of Appendix XB,

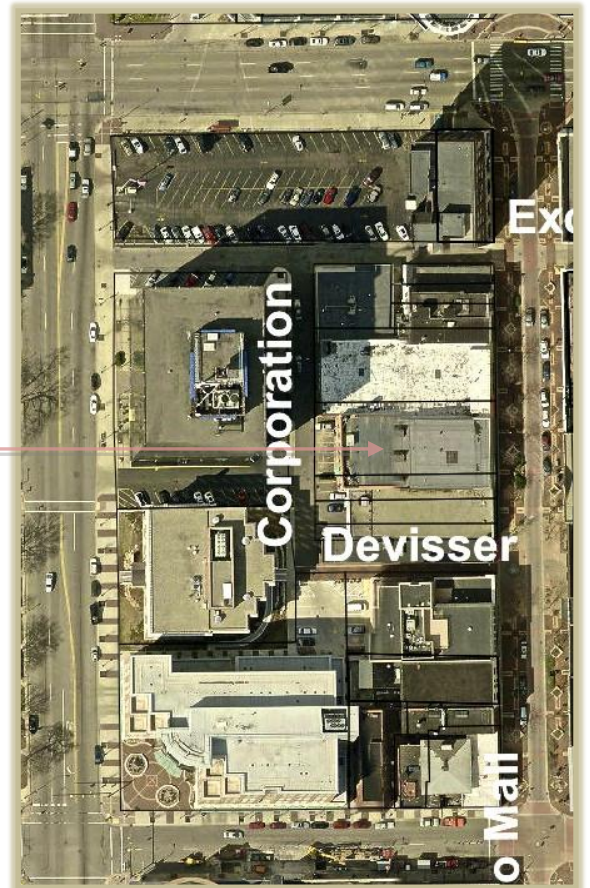
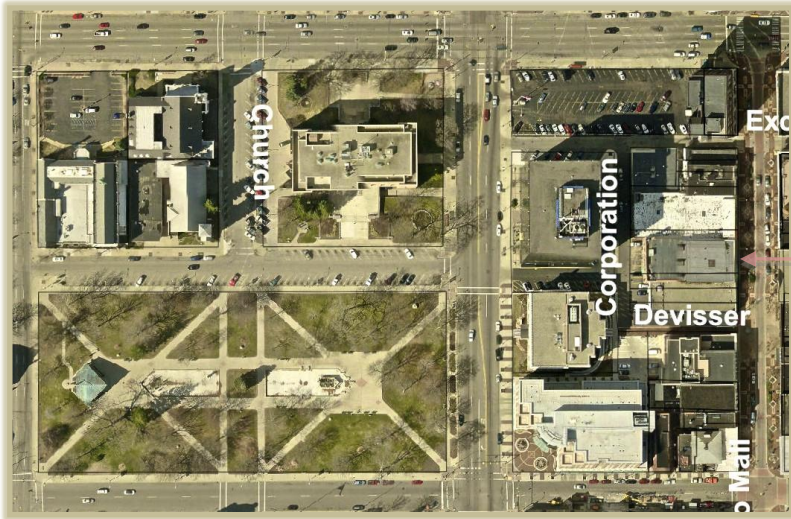


Image N

**1867 Corporation Hall
Early 1900s**

**From Labadie's Souvenir Picturesque Kalamazoo 1909
Courtesy Dan Blacken
Gilmore Real Estate**

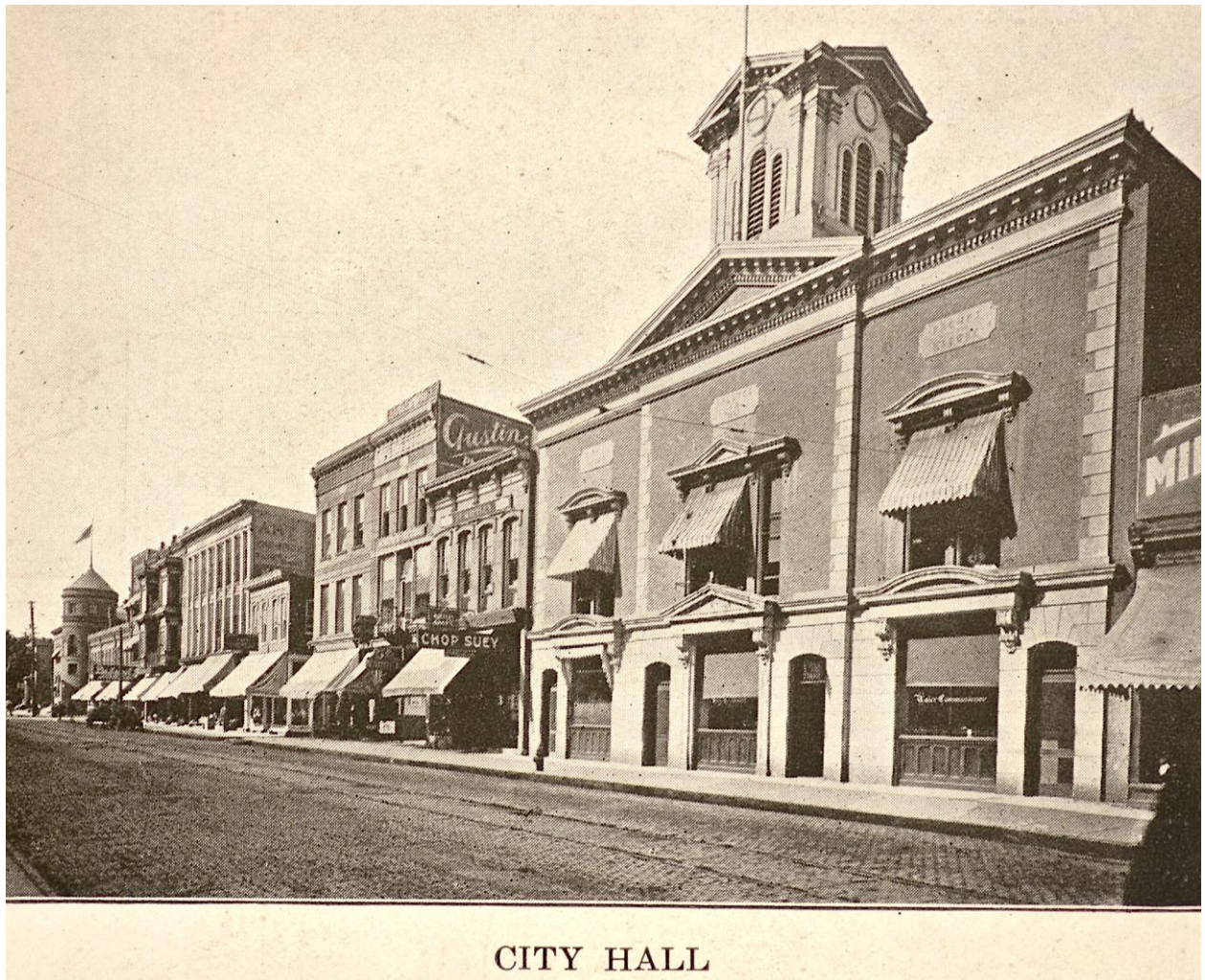


Image O



South Burdick Street, north from South Street, 1891-1892 with Kalamazoo Telegraph (near left) building and International Hotel visible in this image by photographer Wallace S. White.

Image, courtesy of the Kalamazoo Public Library file P-201.

On the left, just beyond the third utility pole, Corporation Hall's tower is visible above the heights of the surrounding "City-Scape".

Image P

The following base photo so precious, like all the others that being the original, circa 1908, Kalamazoo Valley Museum Photograph #12811 47.721.80 taken from East Side of South Burdick approximately one or so building lengths south of the Hall with a lens position about seven feet high plus or minus a few inches.



The following ten images were enlarged from the preceding KVM file to accentuate the beauty and intricacies that were lost as the years and progress went on:

“In 1936, the front façade, with all of its fine detail, was removed entirely and replaced with a contemporary design”,

as noted within the last paragraph of the Corporation Hall Excerpt from *Kalamazoo Lost and Found* - page 53.

Image P-1



Image P-2



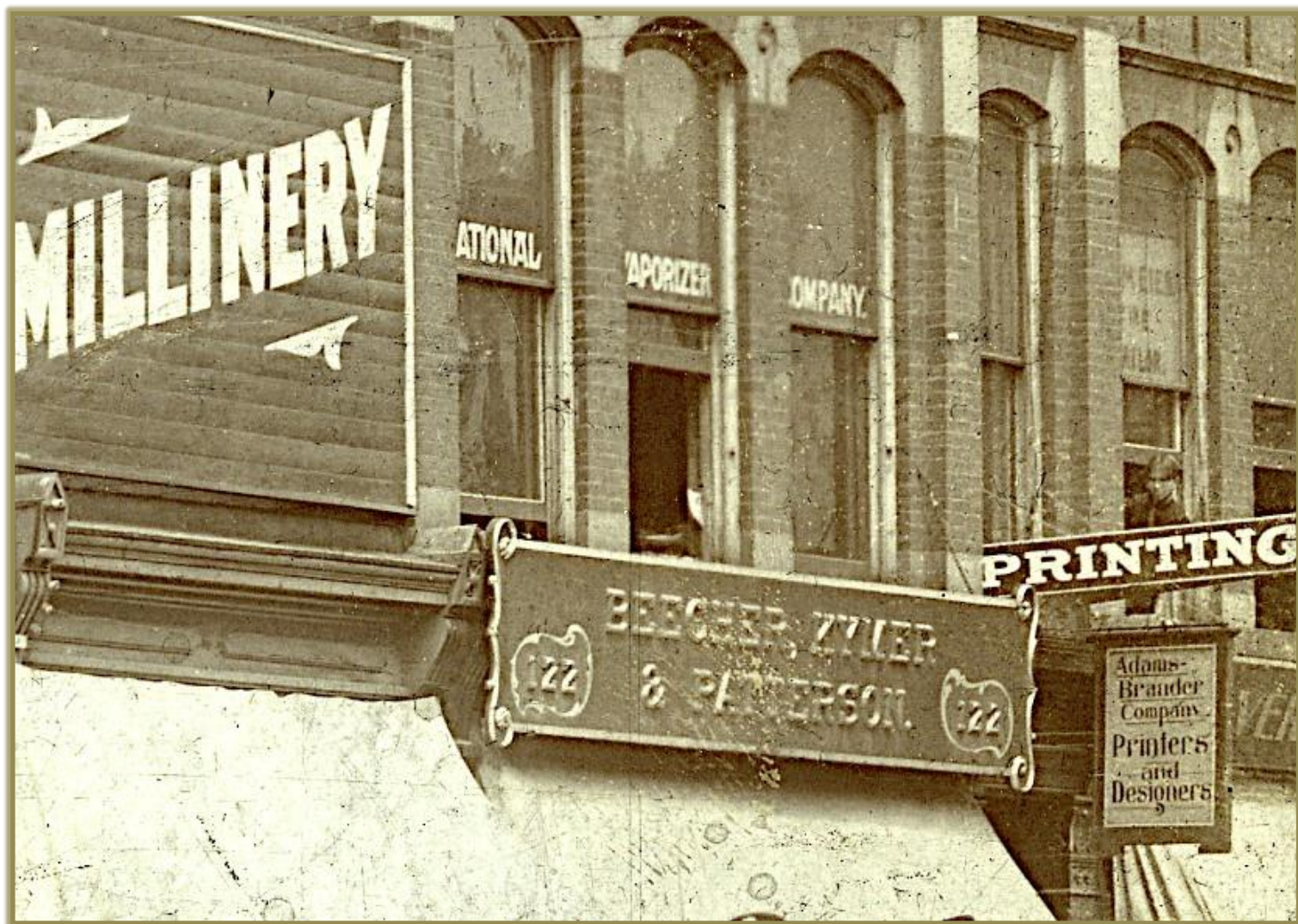
Image P-3



Image P-4



Image P-5



By the way, before turning the page, is there an ancestor you might recognize?

Images P-6, P-7 & P-8



Images P-9 & P-10



Appendix X A

Brief Story on the Writer's Appreciation of Wood

As the image below, part of the writer's collection, shows, the Maple on the SW corner of Michigan and Rose was torn asunder by the May 13, 1980 Tornado. As the saw teams were moving around the Courthouse grounds, their chains chewing voraciously at the bark and fiber. The writer had been watching the Maple and quickly noticed the chain's rattle and the muffled echo of the piston, above all the other cutting taking place ready for the wedge cut of this mighty Burr-Oak; shown in some of the images that following when it was younger. A crane's cable, in the foreground below, held it's top to let it come down gently once guillotined from its base.



As they then approached the Maple and were at its base the writer, interrupting the saw crew, indicated No! – it stays just like it is. A small debate developed when the County Road Commissioner Forester, who, along with other foresters in the downtown, were making the trim/cut judgments. In the end, the writer was convincing.

As time went on and employment locations changed, the Maple, adorned with the rising 1937 flag pole and the swirling American Flag, was never out of sight and as the summer went on some leafing occurred. The 1981 spring suggested it would make it with its partner, the steel of the 1937 dedicated County Building flag pole with American Flag flying majestically over the top of and marking with dignity Sally and Titus Bronson's dedicated "Courthouse Square".

Over the years the Maple flourished more and stood fast; shading all who passed by. But ten or so years ago one could detect some deterioration. In the fall of 2009 when leaving the Comerica Building one could not but help hear the steady hum and clattering of the chain saws on the other side of Rose Street.

Looking over, the Maple was merely a truckload of wood with chips and leaves covering the sidewalk. Crossing across Rose one could see a few chunks on the sidewalk. The crew was asked if was all right to retrieve a small limb. And like Mike Bryant's crew they were just fine.

Two or so years of drying and then during the week of May 9, 2011 the limb was fashioned into the following chunky shape and proudly hangs on a stringer along with other chunks, lumps and limbs of wood of varying species fashioned in the shape of our underwater friends.

Yesterday's Catch #9 - Ole Courthouse Flag Pole Maple

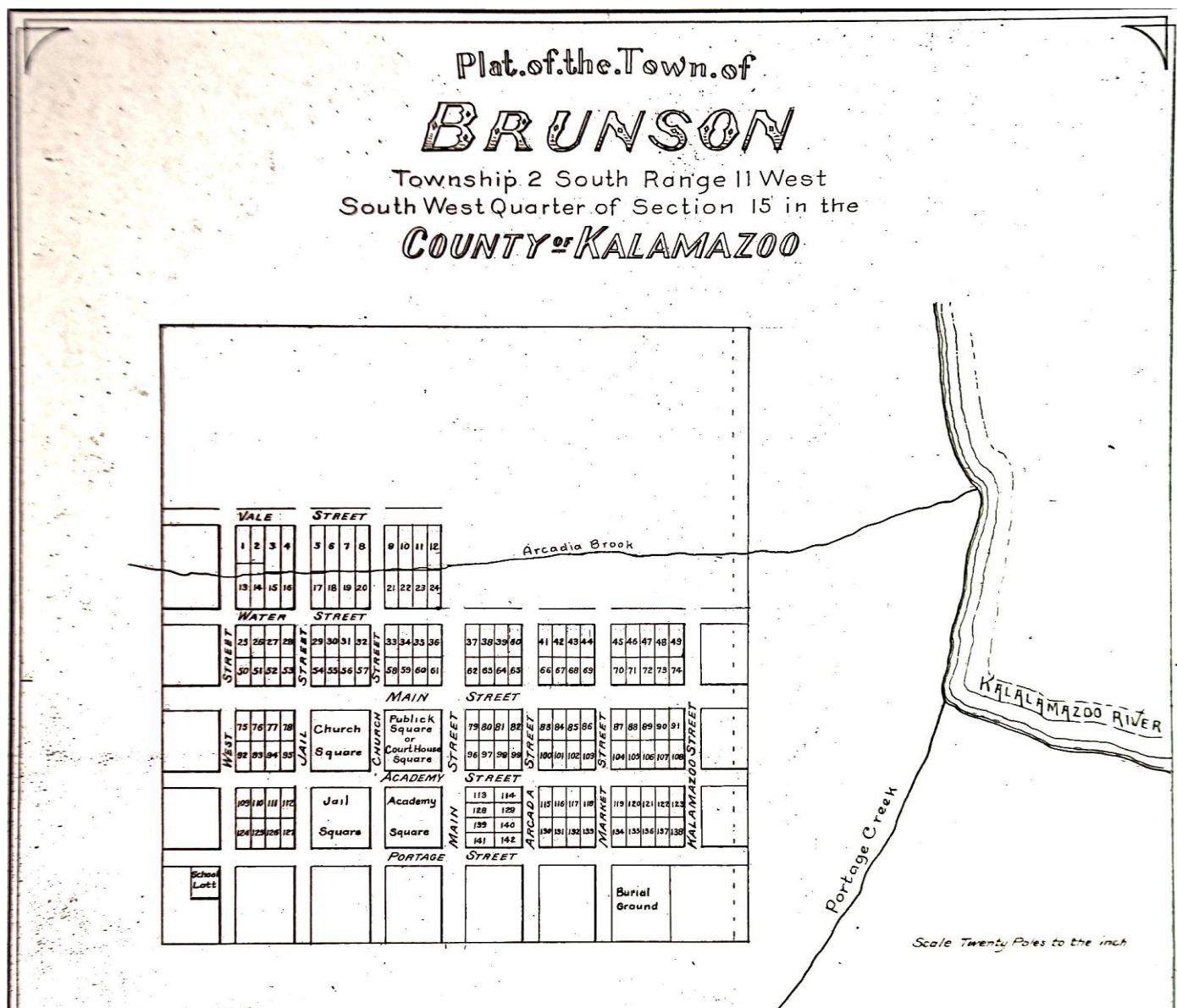


Writer's Electronic image, Nikon D-7000 – Nikkor 105mm Micro 2.8 Lens

Appendix X B

Contrasting Bird's Eye Views of the Quarter Section

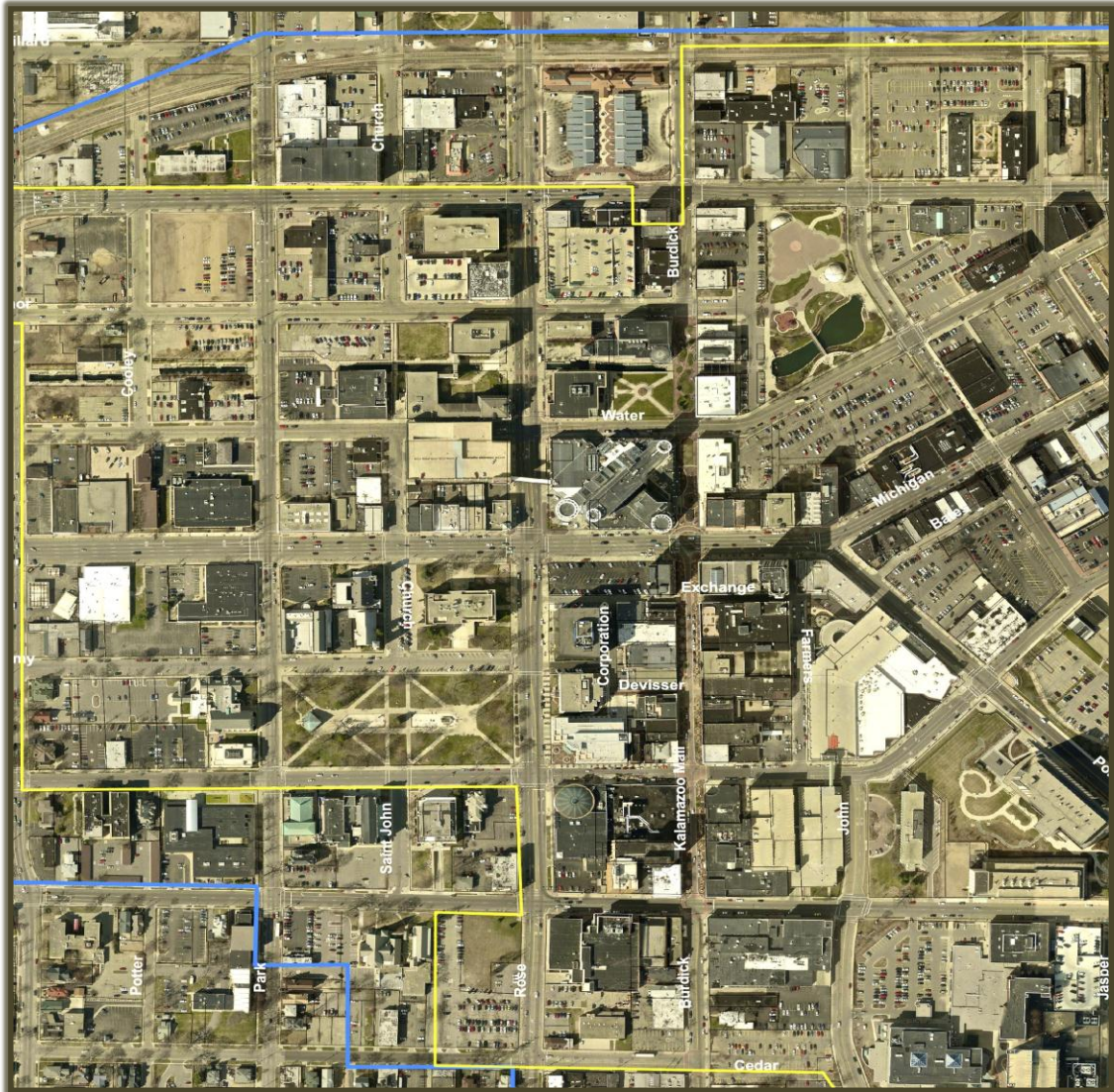
1831



Recorded March 12, 1831
By Messer's Titus Bronson & Richard P. Stevenson
Witnessed by Justice of the Peace Wm Duncan
Mathematician Phineas Hunt
Register of Deeds W.P. Shutt

A City of Kalamazoo, 2011 aerial image the writer cropped to the **SW¼ S15** - the core downtown – the identical measurements of the 1831 platted Town of Brunson. The two 80-acre tracts are bounded on the north by a portion of the Martin Luther King Memorial Park, on the West by the full extent of Westnedge Avenue, on the South by the middle of Lovell Street and on the East by the west edge of Porter Street – a quarter square mile of progress from the beginning to continued progress in the making! ⁴⁵

2012



⁴⁵ Yellow lines represent a Tax Increment Financing Authority (TIFA) and the blue lines the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). About 90% of the revenues to fund improvements, programs, and continued public-side progress in the downtown arise from captured taxes of governmental and educational entities in the TIFA, which have so agreed; the balance being from a 2% DDA property tax levy.

Appendix X c

A Planner's Vision

Steve Deisler has been a Kalamazoo downtown urban planner and economic developer for 33 years right out of WMU, the last 13 years for Downtown Kalamazoo, Inc.

In his office on the fifth floor of the Argos East Building the drawing on the following page hangs framed in Steve's office with the following identification in the lower, but virtually, unreadable, part of the drawing.

Scale one-inch equals 100 feet

**Jacob L. Crane Jr. Town Planner
Chicago, Illinois
November 1929**

Given the 14" north / south and 16" east / west dimension of the drawing the area encompasses 50 + acres or about one-third the size of the initial 1831 Plat of Brunson. So Mr. Crane's vision was pretty large.

The time period, 1929, is close to the halfway point of the initial 1831 Plat. Mr. Crane was one of the first Town planning consultants in the country. His Citywide plan included this development vision for a city square surrounding Bronson Park. Not all the elements of his plan were pursued however it led to the construction of two important civic buildings; City Hall and the Kalamazoo County Building now located on the square. City offices located in Corporation Hall moved to the new City Hall in 1931.

A gracious thanks to Steve for making this keepsake available for the writers Nikon D-7000 – AF-S Nikkor 24-120mm 1:4 G ED LENS.



Appendix X D

Within the Spires

Aside from the 1831 and 2012 aerial images in Appendix **X B**, we wanted to provide you an elevated perspective, circa 1900, of this special **SW ¼ S15 T2S R1 W**, which captures 70 years of progress of the two villages and, then later, the initial 16 or so years of the City of Kalamazoo's core downtown, as well as pretty good portions of near downtown and some degree of peripheral manufacturing and residential areas.

First though, it comes from a special "square" left to all of us by Titus and Sally Bronson, which is sandwiched between two of the writer's employments noted in the opening of this writing – the location of the first, second and third courthouses.

1st Kalamazoo County Courthouse

1836 - 1886



Kalamazoo Public Library file P-266

According to the file, this is the first courthouse during the process of being moved in 1883 to make room for the new courthouse to be constructed. Workers and spectators posed for the photo taken from the southwest across Academy Street with buildings on Main (now Michigan) visible at left, jail at right. However, the file continues on to indicate that the new courthouse is not visible behind the building being moved, and for this reason this photo had to have been of the old courthouse when it was moved the first time, not when it was moved off the block after the completion of the new courthouse, in 1885 with its construction beginning in 1883.

The glass image for this photo was purchased by the Kalamazoo Public Library from the estate of Wallace. S. White who the file suggests was the photographer.

2nd Kalamazoo County Courthouse
1886 – 1936



Kalamazoo Public Library file P-266

A front view of the second courthouse with several men on the steps, a horse-drawn wagon in front, the jail at the left, First Reformed Church at the right with W. S. White possibly being the photographer. The Building was completed in 1885. Frank Knappen, whose sign appears in the right hand second floor window, no longer has a law office in the courthouse after 1888 (Kalamazoo City Directory). The glass negative was also purchased from the estate of W. S. White by the Kalamazoo Public Library.

Notice the four beautiful spires at each corner and then the middle spire reaching up. An enterprising visionary, leaving imaging tracks for the future, ascended the middle spire and captured the next eight panoramic images of the City of Kalamazoo in or around 1900.

The writer coined "Within the Spires" for reasons the viewer will soon see. It must have been something to be there at the top of one of the highest vantage points right at West Michigan and Rose Streets; aside from, perhaps, steeples of the various religious organizations many of which readers will clearly see.

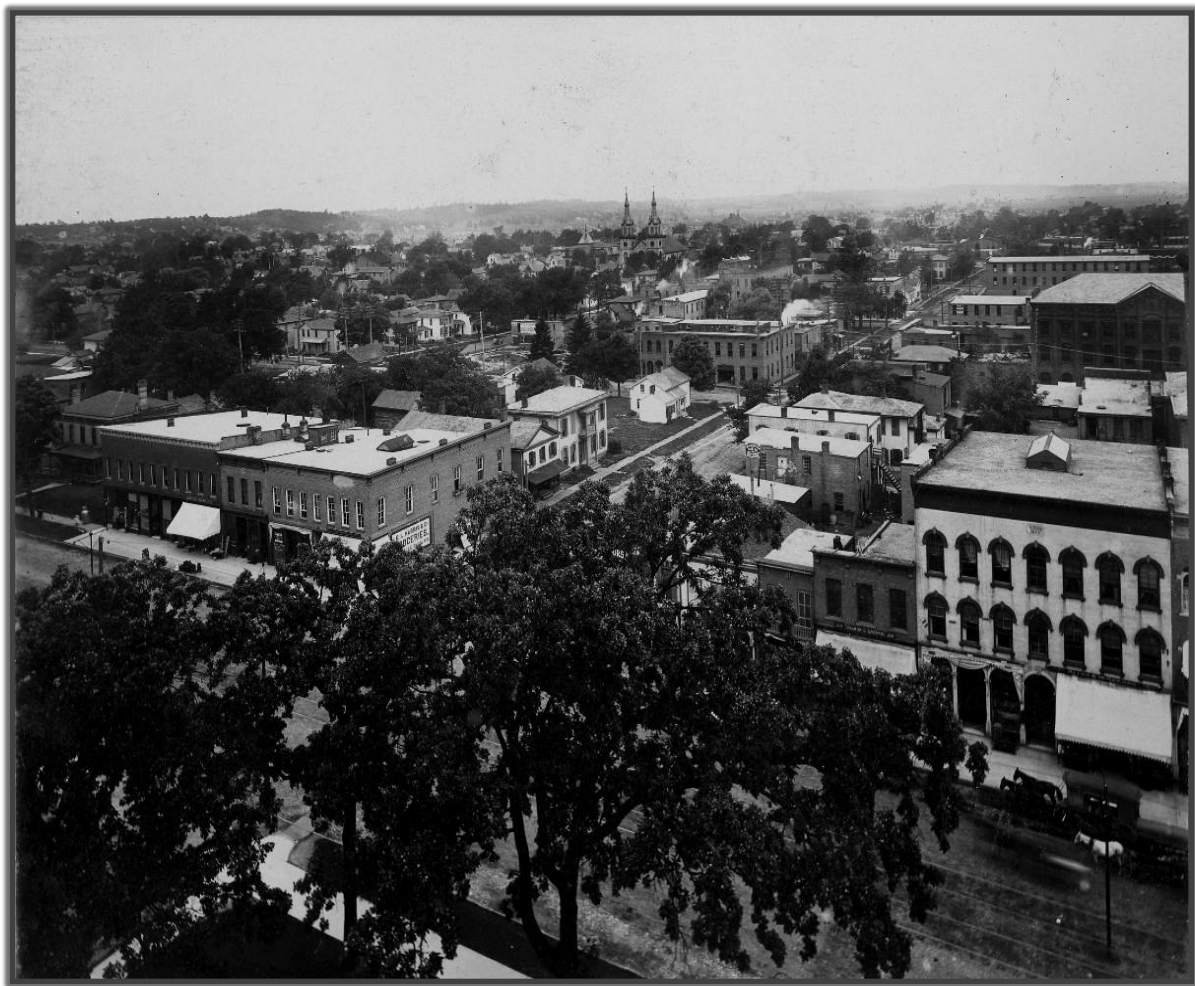
The deepest of gratitude to the Kalamazoo Public Library for the use of this splendid file set P-1050-1057 and the 8 electronic panorama images captured by Theodore P. Sheldon about 112 years ago from his transverse around the middle spire of our second courthouse.

The scene descriptions the reader will observe are from the Kalamazoo Public Library's files.

Within the Spires

1. View from Kalamazoo County Courthouse, c1900

Looking north-northwest. West Main Street (now Michigan Avenue) in foreground. Church Street cuts diagonally through the picture. Twin spires of St. Augustine Catholic Church in center background.



Within the Spires

2. View from Kalamazoo County Courthouse, c1900

Looking north-northeast. West Main Street (now Michigan Avenue) in foreground. Rose Street is partially visible in the center of the picture. The building whose roof is visible just to the right of the top of the flag is the first courthouse, which was moved to make room for the second. The long building just beyond that was the Lawrence and Chapin Foundry and later Vermeulen's Furniture Store. It still stands facing Rose Street.



Kalamazoo Public Library Photograph P-1051

Within the Spires

3. View from Kalamazoo County Courthouse, c1900

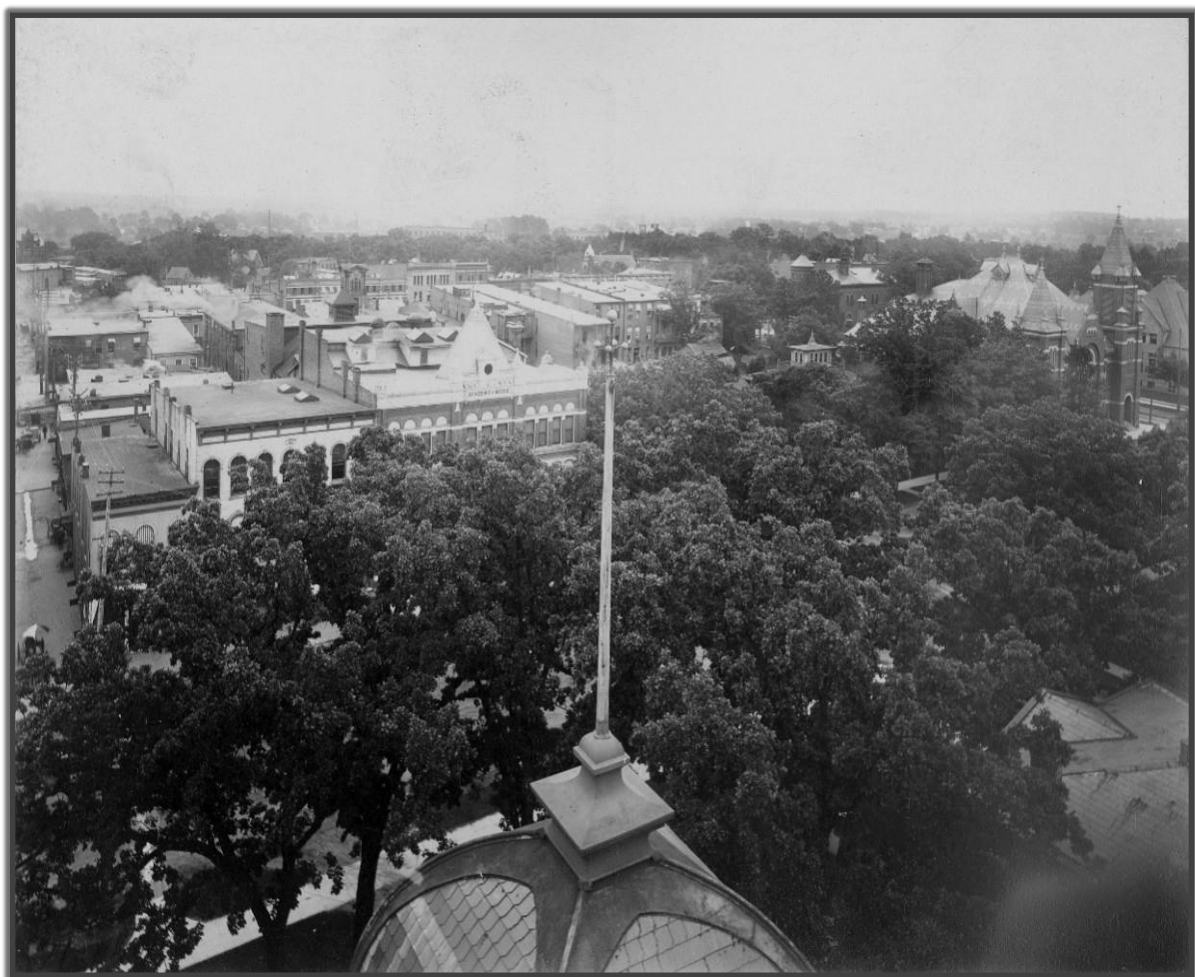
Looking northeast. West Main Street (now Michigan Avenue) in left foreground. Rose Street runs in front of the light-colored building to the right.



Within the Spires

4. View from Kalamazoo County Courthouse, c1900

Looking east-southeast. The building with the peaked roof to the left of center was the Academy of Music. The large dark brick building to the right was First Presbyterian Church. The old Kalamazoo Public Library is at the right of the church.

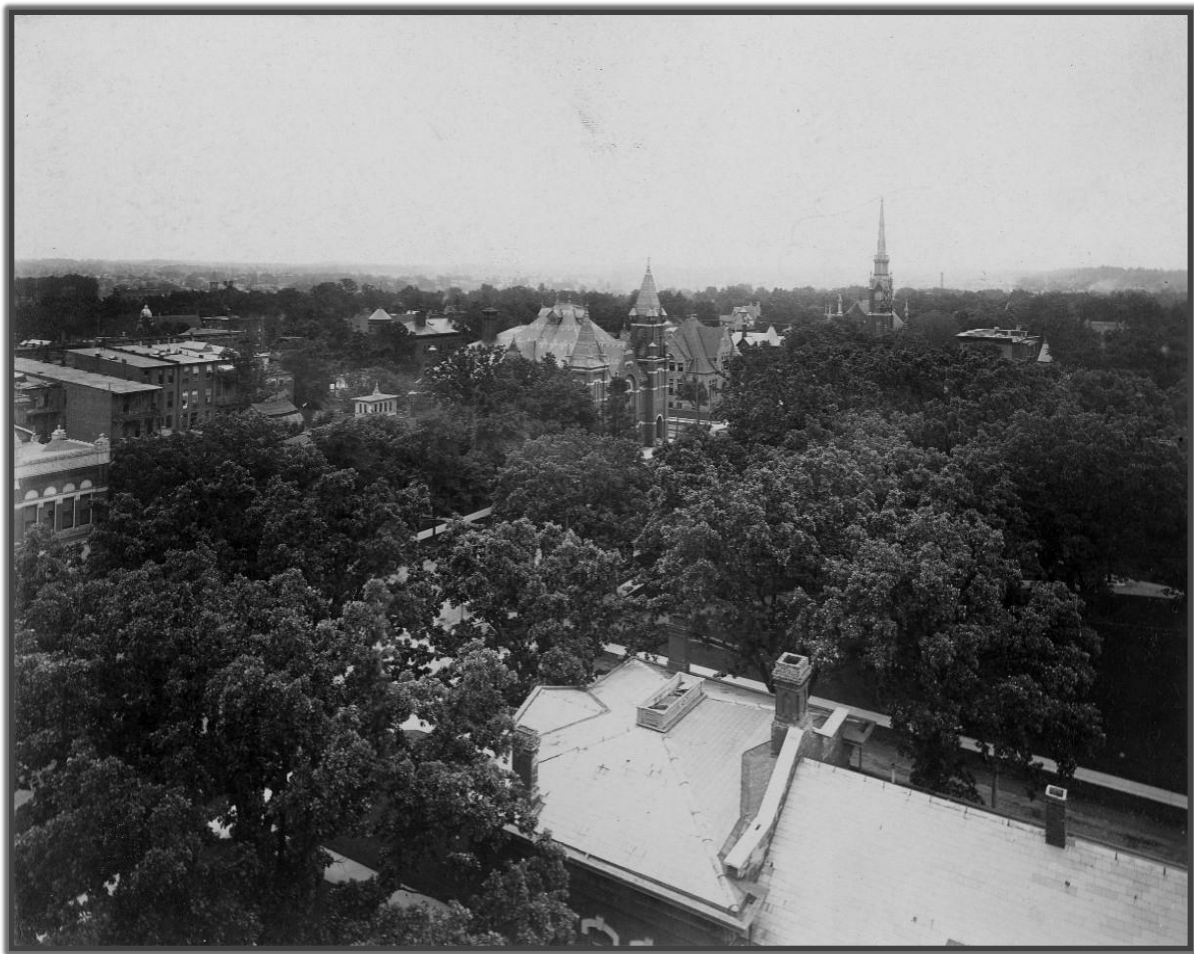


Kalamazoo Public Library Photograph P-1053

Within the Spires

5. View from Kalamazoo County Courthouse, c1900

Looking southeast. The roof of the county jail appears in the foreground. First Presbyterian Church and the Kalamazoo Public Library are visible in the center background, with the spire of First Methodist Church to the right of them.



Kalamazoo Public Library Photograph P-1054

Within the Spires

6. View from Kalamazoo County Courthouse, c1900

Looking south across Academy Street toward Bronson Park. The roof of the county jail appears in the left foreground. The tower in the center right belongs to First Reformed Church.

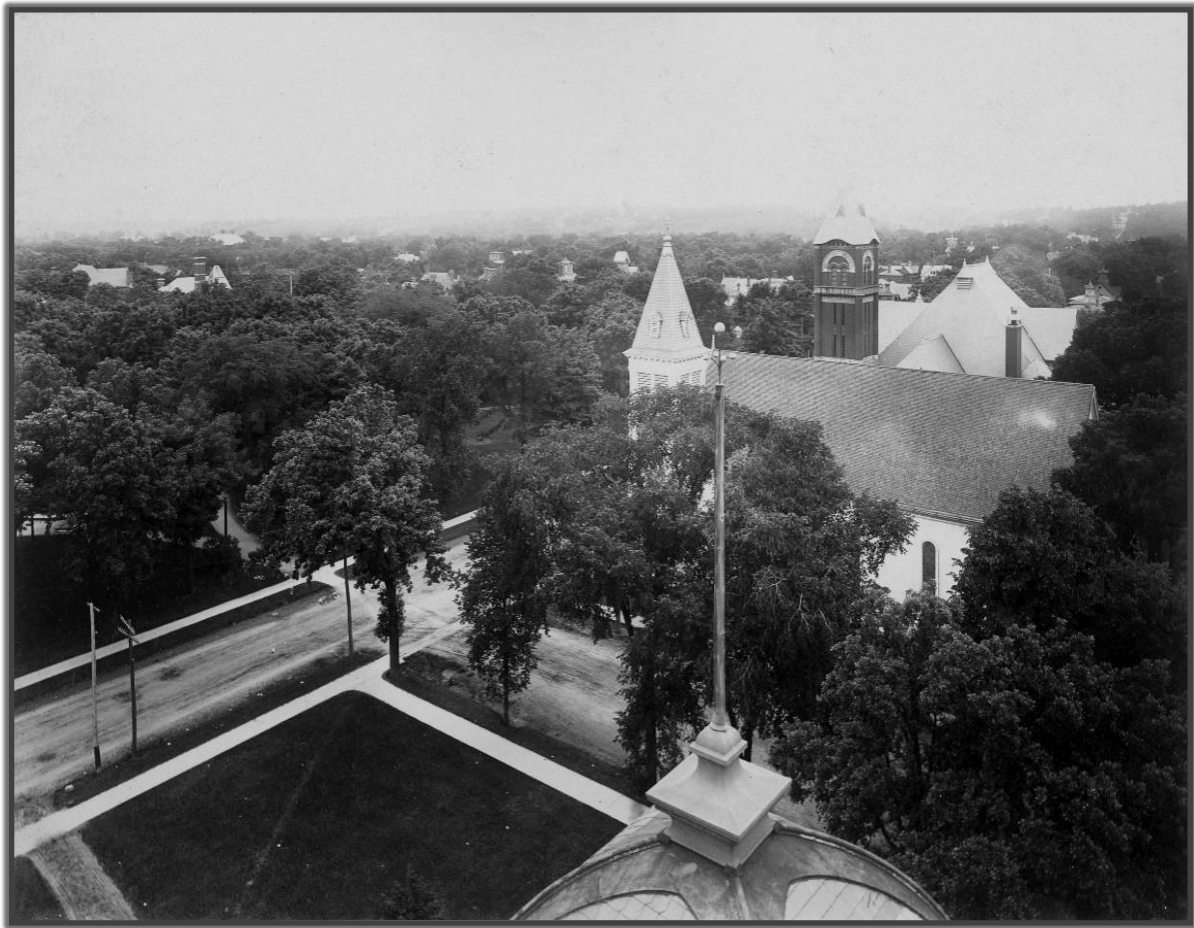


Kalamazoo Public Library Photograph P-1055

Within the Spires

7. View from Kalamazoo County Courthouse, c1900

Looking southwest across the intersection of Academy and Church Streets toward Bronson Park. First Reformed Church is at the center right, with the tower of First Congregational Church just beyond it.



Kalamazoo Public Library Photograph P-1056

Within the Spires

8. View from Kalamazoo County Courthouse, c1900

Looking west-northwest across the intersection of Church and West Main (now West Michigan) Streets. First Baptist Church is at the left, the twin towers of St. Augustine's Catholic Church in the right background.



Kalamazoo Public Library Photograph P-1057

Within the Spires

Image # 4 (P-1053) One More Time:

The Nikon Captures Corporation Hall Tower Amidst the Business of the Rooftops



3rd and Present Kalamazoo County Building (Courthouse)

1937 -



Captured by the writer's Nikon F-3 in the 1990s
Three Copies in Print
James Gregart, Prosecuting Attorney,
Judge William Schma,
Writer

A Poem To Close

Pioneer Collections – Report of the Pioneer Society
State of Michigan Vol. I. Pages 211/212

“The following was written by E. Lakin Brown, to be sung at
the pioneer meeting at Kalamazoo, August 31st,
1876 and was set to music by Jonas Allen:

I.

Oh, bright were the hopes of the young pioneer,
And sweet was the joy that came o'er him,
For his heart it was brave, and strong was his arm,
And a broad, fertile land lay before him.

II.

And there by his side was his heart's chosen bride,
Who want and privation knew never;
From kindred and home he had borne her away,
To be guarded and cherished forever.

V.

But the years rolled away and prosperity came,
Wealth and ease on frugality founded;
Now the husband and wife tread the down-hill of life
By brave sons and fair daughters surrounded.

III.

A drear home for a bride is the wilderness wide,
Her Heart to old memories turning,
And lonely and sad and o'er burdened with care,
For kindred and sympathy yearning.

VI.

And the young pioneer has grown stooping and gray,
And he marvels his limbs are no stronger;
And the cheek of the bride is now sallow and thin,
And her eyes beam with brightness no longer.

IV.

Then stern was the task, and long was the toil,
Vain longing for all that was needed,
Yet bravely their toils and privations were borne,
As the wilderness slowly receded.

VII.

All honor and praise to the old pioneers;
You may never know all their story;
What they found but a desert a garden became,
And their toll and success is their story.”

Graciously provided by
Western Michigan University Archives
Regional History Room Collection

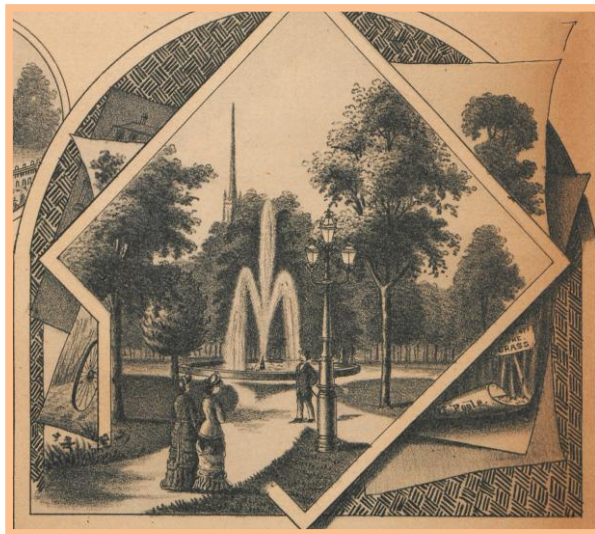
Thank You Twice

Thank you for taking the time to just glance at, peruse and or digest this writing and its images. This project was intriguing to think about, plan and develop and the writer has thoroughly enjoyed somewhere between 950 to 1100 hours of time planning the Etching of 1867 Corporation Hall, researching, imaging, chasing, calling, driving, and writing about the beginning and early years of our core downtown.

Perhaps after so many pages one can tell the writer enjoys images. Not only are many historical, but it is the stories the images tell, whether from an individual's hand, photographically or electronically; and the understanding and "feel" they convey. So as we leave, there are three additional images to share:

- *1883 Birds Eye View of Kalamazoo,*
- October 8, 2012 Birds Eye View of our Community's core downtown and its periphery from its tallest building and
- January 10, 2012 seasonal image of Bronson Park the land of which was "bequeathed" / dedicated to all of us by the philanthropic actions of Sally and Titus Bronson in 1833 along with Courthouse Square.

Wes Freeland
October 28, 2012



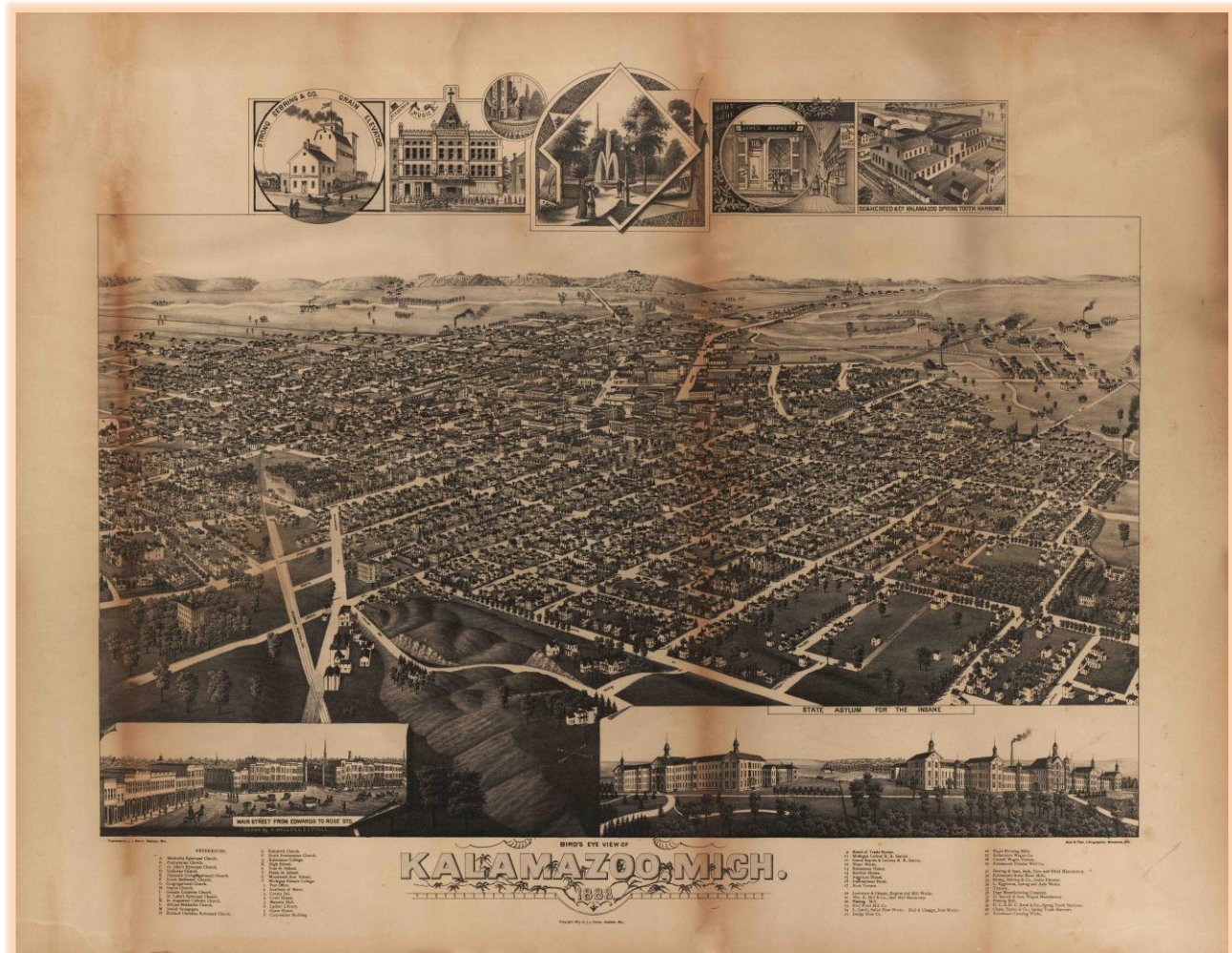
To: Sally and Titus Bronson and all of the other pioneer women and men in our community's formative years,

Thank you!

Three Elevated Images to End

Birds Eye View of Kalamazoo -1883

Writer's Compressed Image of 424 mb Electronic Master Image Graciously
Provided by Clarke Historical Library (CMU) file #b1817393~SO
Library of Congress call number – G4114.K2A3 1883 .W4



Panoramic city maps, popular at the turn of the century, depicted U.S. towns from the perspective that came to be known as bird's-eye maps. These non-photographic old maps, depicted from oblique angles, showed street patterns, buildings and the predominant surrounding landscape in perspective. Going to great lengths to make these maps, artists would often climb surrounding hills or trees, sometimes even building platforms from which to achieve the "bird's eye" perspective. They also used to take rides in hot air balloons in order to get the proper perspective. (From website description www.rare-maps.com).

Birds Eye View of Kalamazoo - 2012

Writer's Electronic Image
Nikon D-7000 Nikkor - 12-24 mm f/1.4 EG Lens
October 10, 2012



Opportunity to Capture the Core of Downtown Kalamazoo
Lying in the two 80-Acre Tracts forming the Initial Village of Brunson
Graciously Provided by The Hinman Company

Birds Eye View of Bronson Park – January 2012

Writer's Electronic Image Nikon D-7000
Nikkor AF-S 24.0-120.0mm 1:4 G ED Lens
January 10, 2012

